THE PROBLEM OF THE "POSITIVITY" OF THE GOSPEL IN THE HEGELIAN DIALECTIC OF ALIENATION AND RECONCILIATION

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SUMMARY

"The 'Positivity' of the Gospel in the Hegelian Dialectic of Alienation and Reconciliation" — Stephen D. Crites

The Introduction discusses the discipline of philosophical theology, as a Christian theological discipline engaged in dialogue with any serious analysis of the human situation and any proposal of human significance, even though faith in the Gospel may not be presupposed in such analysis and proposal. The body of the dissertation treats one of the chief problems involved in the very possibility of such dialogue, a problem treated in relation to one of the most strenuous philosophical efforts ever made to solve it: In hegelian terminology, this problem emerges as that of the "positivity" of the Gospel. A redemptive, supra-historical significance is claimed for a unique and paradoxical event which is simply given in history. As such, it appears heterogeneous to man's reason, cannot belong properly to it but can only be "received" as an alien claim.

After surveying the emergence and development of the problem in Hegel's early writings, we discuss in detail the way in which it is dealt with in his mature System. Hegel acknowledges that the Truth of the Gospel must be given to human thought, positively; it could not have been discovered independent of the Gospel event itself. But once given, thought has the task of explaining this Truth in its rational necessity, not through a form of thought imposed on it but through a reorientation of thought in accordance with it. The task is to attain in fact the standpoint of a Reason in which the Truth of the Gospel is in principle implicit and necessary, and thereby internally related to all other determinants of human self-consciousness in general.

In showing how Hegel develops this position, our discussion moves in three general steps: First we discuss the System as the explication of a completely self-reflexive Reason, which grasps all truth as internally related moments in its own inner movement. Second, we discuss the way in which Hegel treats the human problem and its ultimate solution as such necessary moments, in a dialectic of alienation and reconciliation in which certain Christian doctrines are already interpreted and incorporated. Finally, we discuss Hegel's synthesis of this dialectic with the Gospel itself, by means of the Aufhebung of the positive form in which its Truth is received.

Each of these three steps is discussed critically. Not only do we question the way in which Hegel in fact carried the project out, but we question whether the Gospel can in principle be rationalized in this way without an essential distortion of its claim.

These critical questions are then pursued in relation to the critiques directed against Hegel by some of his immediate successors. Our discussion proceeds backward, through the same three steps already developed: First, we discuss David Friedrich Strauss' rejection of Hegel's synthesis of Gospel and System, and we see the reasons why the maintenance of the idealistic presuppositions of the System required him to reject the claim of the Gospel. Second, we examine the attempt by Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx to use the dialectic itself, not only against Christian theology and bourgeois society, but also against the idealistic standpoint of the System. Finally, we examine Søren Kierkegaard's fundamental rejection of the System and its dialectic, in a return to the standpoint of the positivity of the Gospel. These positions are also criticized, though their critiques of Hegel are sustained. Throughout, however, we point to the possibility of basic dialogue, in virtue of a radicalization of the standpoint of grace as sovereign grace, given in the positivity of the Gospel itself. Such dialogue is not only examined, but exemplified in the dissertation.

PREFATORY NOTES

In translating passages from the German I have made free use of published English translations when they were available. I retained the rendering of some passages in published translations, altered others, and frequently translated afresh. In every case I compared the passage quoted with the German original, and take responsibility for the translations which appear in this dissertation. In the case of the Kierkegaard texts, I was much more at the mercy of the published English translations, which I have altered only where indicated in the foot-note.

I have in general adopted the translation of important systematic terms which has become conventional in the literature concerning Hegel in the English language. I have capitalized certain terms when used in a systematic sense, as a way of giving warning that ordinary meanings would be misleading. When the term appears no longer to be used in the special, systematic sense, it is no longer capitalized. There are two terms basic to the hegelian vocabulary, however, which I have simply used in the German form without underscoring, because there is no adequate English rendering at all and those which have been used are in dispute. That is, the words "Geist" and "aufheben" (in all its forms) have for the purposes of this essay been adopted into the English language.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

page

PREFATORY NOTES iv

INTRODUCTION 1

Chapter

I. HEGEL'S EARLY DISCOVERY OF THE PROBLEM 15

i. A Young Kantian Discovers the Positivity of the Gospel 16

ii. Hegel's Development of the Problem in Further Early Writings 27

II. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF REASON IN HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY . . . 40

i. The Nature of Philosophical System 40

ii. Hegel's "Empiricism": Find the Reason in the Facts 47

iii. The Implicit Notion as Norm and Telos 60

III. THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF HEGEL'S DIALECTIC: THE DIVINE GROUND OF RECONCILIATION 71

i. God "in Himself": The Holy Trinity 73

ii. What Is the Ontological Status of Hegel's God? . . 81

iii. Hegel's Theodicy and the Doctrine of Creation . . . 95

iv. The Implicit Unity of Divine and Human Geist . . . 107

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

Chapter page

IV. HEGEL'S DIALECTIC OF ALIENATION AND RECONCILIATION . . . 124

i. Alienation, Positivity, and Sin 125

ii. Through Alienation to Reconciliation 143

iii. The Accomplishment of Reconciliation 157

iv. Did Hegel Think the World Had Become the Kingdom of God? 170

v. Further Critical Comments 181

V. HEGEL'S AUFHEBUNG OF THE POSITIVITY OF THE GOSPEL . . . 196

i. Positive Religion as an Indispensable Moment in Absolute Knowledge 196

ii. Hegel's Interpretation of "The Fullness of Time" . . 206

iii. Hegel's Interpretation of the Person and Work of Christ 212

iv. The Attestation of the Absolute Religion in Philosophy 227

v. Hegel as a Christian Philosopher 239

VI. STRAUSS EXPELS THE GOSPEL EVENT FROM THE SPECULATIVE GEIST 246

i. A Young-Hegelian Breaks with Church Theology 247

ii. Strauss' Undialectical "Hegelianism" 259

iii. Philosophy and Historical Criticism vs. the Christ of the Gospel 273

iv. Strauss' Separation of Hegel's Christological Conclusions from his Speculative Premises 284

VII. FEUERBACH AND MARX: MAN AND HISTORY SET AGAINST "THEOLOGICAL" IDEALISM 295

i. Feuerbach's View of the True Essence of Christianity 298

ii. Feuerbach: Man's Self-Alienation in Positive Religion 319

iii. Marx: Man's Self-Alienation in Society 331

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

Chapter page

iv. The Quest for a Naturalistic Reconciliation (1) . . 342

v. The Quest for a Naturalistic Reconciliation (2) ... 354

VIII. THE POSITIVITY OF THE GOSPEL AND KIERKEGAARD'S QUALITATIVE DIALECTIC 371

i. Kierkegaard's Attack Against "The System": The Positivity of the Gospel as Absolute Paradox 374

ii. The Kierkegaardian Individual: The Infinite Subjectivity of Faith 388

iii. Comments in Conclusion 399

BIBLIOGRAPHY 404

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is an essay in philosophical theology. I intend to speak of matters of faith with some metaphysical rigor. To say so much is already to have disqualified the whole enterprise for many who are otherwise people of cultivation and good will. For the anti-religious or the unreligious, the very reference to theology is enough to be incriminating; and to call it philosophical theology means that I am going to be sophistical as well as absurd. Is it possible that I have never heard of Hume and Kant, am I not aware that Bertrand Russell still lives? Indeed, in some quarters it is difficult to decide which is worse, to speak of matters of faith, or to speak metaphysically. The combination, at any rate, is horrendous.

One might strike a confessional posture at this point, and declare that one intends to speak only within the Church anyway, in the context of faith. Let the heathen rage, what care I for the infidel! But to withdraw into the household of faith, for the poor philosophical theologian, is to be as the man who fled from the lion and the bear into his own house, and leaned his hand against the wall, only to be bitten by the serpent. This is the case, at least, for those parts of the wall which harbor the proponents of neo-Reformation theology. One could move to a more hospitable piece of wall, but my unhappy situation is that the wall-space in which I feel theologically at home is precisely the one in which the serpents are thickest. Within these precincts, philosophical theology suggests "natural" theology, religion in general, apologetics, and things of that ilk. Now, if "religion" means a cosmological relation of a generic sort to a higher power, or a general mental or emotional attitude, of which the Christian Gospel in common with other "religious teachings", then, is a specification, I should regard "religion" as an illusion. I do not deny that there may be some tendency in humanity at large that can be called "religion", but I do deny that the Gospel is a form of such a tendency. Again, if natural theology is a discipline in which we say as much as we can about God apart from special revelation, then the mastery of natural theology will not be much of an attainment, since in fact we cannot speak at all about God without His first speaking to us. Or if apologetics is an enterprise in which we seek a common ground with people outside Christian faith, and beginning with this basis seek to convince them that the logic of necessity or the logic of probability drives them within the fold, then apologetics is empty sophistry; worse yet, it betrays faith by obscuring its genuine basis and starting-point.

Still, there is a task which may properly be called philosophical theology, and which is in my judgment not only valid but necessary within the Church. According to my understanding, philosophical theology is fundamentally theology, Christian theology from beginning to end. It finds its source, its motive, its standpoint, its seriousness, in the gracious act of God in Jesus Christ. It is part of the Church's response to the Gospel, and its whole task is embraced in that response. Philosophical theology is not dogmatics, in any strict sense of that term. But neither is it an "other task", independent of dogmatics, or with a qualified or divided obedience to the Gospel. It does not treat the Gospel as simply one of two or more poles. Indeed, while it is not dogmatics, its concern is ultimately dogmatic, as the concern of all the theological disciplines is ultimately dogmatic, since it seeks from within faith itself to clarify what faith believes. Yet in its specific differentia it is not exegesis or church history or homiletics; nor is it dogmatics, in the sense of a special discipline which seeks to define faith's pure reflection into its own peculiar content as the direct recipient of grace.[1]

Philosophical theology is _fides_ _quaerens_ _intellectum_, in a doubly reflected sense. It is in the first place faith seeking understanding of "the world"; it is faith interested in men and their ideological crises, faith involved in earnest conversation with that which is outside itself. It is necessary that faith seek this understanding, not only in the sense that the theologian seeks to communicate with people who do not share his faith, but also in the sense that his own inner dialogue is a dialogue with "the world", because he is himself inescapably "in the world". However much he may protest that the Gospel is not an ideology, the fact remains that he himself is ideological in the very nature of his being in the world. He is committed not only to political, economic, social ideologies, but to ideas of the good, the true, and the beautiful. Everything depends upon his not identifying the Gospel with these commitments, or subordinating it to them; the Gospel must remain judgmental over them. But faithfulness to the Gospel depends for this very reason upon a clear recognition of the ideological nature of one's own involvement in the world. To fail in this recognition is to fall almost inevitably into the pit of making the Gospel itself into an ideology by identifying it with one's own "deepest loyalties", even while loudly proclaiming one's detachment from all ideologies; this pit is the very pit of idolatry.

The philosophical theologian has genuine secular concern, and he knows it to be secular. Of course any kind of theologian, or any Christian, has such concern. But what gives the philosophical theologian his differentia, in the first instance, is his acceptance as

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1. By this definition, indeed, the authentic content of dogmatics is always an ideal toward which the dogmatician strives without ever being finished with his task; for he deals with the living act of God which refuses to be isolated and codified. But dogmatics is not on that account dispensable.

his special Christian vocation a reflective, critical occupation with this concern. He wishes to speak from faith, not only to the world as in Church proclamation, but with the world and in the world. He cannot be expertly informed in all fields, he cannot in fact converse with everyone. But nothing that is of human concern is in principle excluded from his orbit, neither the arts nor political or economic life nor social or natural sciences, nor philosophy itself. This does not mean that the philosophical theologian is simply a kind of Renaissance man, the master of the curriculum. He is engaged in these activities because men live in them, because they define the field in which the conflicts and strivings of his generation are concretely exercised. He is engaged as a theologian in the socio-ideological milieu in which he is in any case inextricably engaged as a man. His concern is contemporary, his activity is of the nature of dialogue. Of course in this dialogue he both speaks and listens from within the Church's faith. This fact has the consequence that some will regard him as an alien and a pretender, a special pleader not really willing to converse on any terms but his own. They may refuse to converse with him on the ground that dialogue with him is impossible because of the unconditional nature of his faith. Such a rejection is justified if he is not willing to risk actual engagement, the insecurity of dialogue in which commitment actually hangs in the balance. The philosophical theologian must live in this risk, must actually accept the questions of other men as his own, and their proximate and ultimate aspirations as potentially his own. Dialogue is not a condescension but an engagement. He is engaged as a man who has heard and believed the Gospel; nevertheless he speaks and listens as man with man, and not as God to man.

Of course he cannot suspend his commission to be a witness to the Gospel which he has heard and believed. He cannot simultaneously both be, and not be, a Christian. Yet it is surely a distortion of the Christian's commission to be a witness to the Gospel if "witness", or "proclamation", be aquated with a single grammatical form, a relentless indicative which asserts and asserts and asserts, permitting no interruption, never descending from the pulpit. To make this identification, to restrict proclamation to its narrowest form, to a single form of speech, and then to suggest that proclamation in this sense is the sole task of theology, is surely to make the theologian into a "fantastic creature", who is no longer a man in the exercise of his vocation. We are forbidden to become such fantastic creatures or to imagine ourselves as such fantastic creatures; we are forbidden, not by leveling dogmas of worldly wisdom, but by Gospel itself. Even while our commission to proclaim the Gospel cannot be revoked for an instant, the fact remains that our essential relation to the Gospel is and must continue to be that of hearers. The Gospel comes continually to us, never essentially from us: we remain men among men, precisely in our hearing and believing of the Gospel. It is the Gospel itself which commands and therefore gives us the freedom to be human beings, with the serious listening and speaking with one another which this station entails. This peculiar character of our relation to the Gospel requires even the risk of apostasy which engagement with "the world" implies. To renounce on theological grounds this freedom and the risks it involves is to make of the Gospel a new Law, a System for fantastic creatures. In other words, the task imposed on all Christians, which is the special vocation of philosophical theology, is based fundamentally on the doctrine of justification by faith alone. The Gospel is not a System against which one must be forever checking his ideological purity. To be justified by faith alone is to be free to listen, free to speak "in a human way" (kata anthropon), free even to become speculative, free to take the risks and make the commitments necessary in a man who is a member of a generation of men and faced with the crises of his generation and his hwn conflicts in relation to his generation. Therefore, say I, sword in hand, If this be apologetics, make the most of it!

In faith's seeking after understanding, then, it must project itself into that which is other than itself. But it ought already to be clear that this projection is also the Church's own self-reflection: "The world" with which faith is in dialogue is not simply the field of conflicts alien to the Church, nor is the dialogue simply between the Church inside faith and the heathen outside. 'Tis a cliche, but true: the Church is in the world, and the world is in the Church. The Church reflects within its own fold the battles and aspiration of each successive generation. The interpenetration of Church and world is not an unfortunate necessity which the Church must endure, but is given in the nature of the Church's own distinctive vocation. But the result is that while the Church need not be driven by every wind of doctrine, it nevertheless cannot flee from the wind to safe shelter. That is why the purity of the Gospel is always in jeopardy. Indeed, one must state the matter more rashly: that is why there is not and never has been an antiseptically "pure" Gospel within the Church, unaffected either in form or in content by the particular crisis in which it speaks in any moment in history. Faith's striving to understand the world, then, involves necessarily a strenuous struggle for self-understanding, and that in a double sense: First, it must retain and fiercely insist upon the Gospel's own essential message, even though it cannot do this easily, certainly cannot do it merely by isolating a certain "pure" verbal formula. This task is the specific interest of dogmatics, but the dogmatic interest is one from which philosophical theology draws its heart's blood. However, the Gospel must be held fast in the living Word of God to the concrete situation of men in the crisis of their own generation. Secondly, therefore, it is the task of philosophical theology to understand faith in this ambiguous concreteness. It must understand faith given substance in that Church interpenetrated with the world, that Church which is in the main stream of history's movement from concrete crisis to crisis.[1]

I have spoken of the work of philosophical theology as fides quaerens intellectum in a doubly reflected sense. In going out of itself to understand the world, faith is first reflected back into itself by the mutual interpenetration of Church and world. But this self-reflection in the understanding of its "other" is further intensified by the consideration that "the world" with which the Church is so inextricably bound cannot even in itself be intrinsically alien to faith: for the world is what God so loved that He sent His only begotten Son; the world is what Christ came to save. It is true that Christ confronts the world as a stranger, indeed that he confronts the Church as a stranger. But if this were the only truth, or the essential truth, then the Gospel would be only a wistful plea, and not the proclamation of an accomplished reality, i.e. would not be an accomplished reality, the substantial power of God to salvation. Christ confronts the world as its Lord, just as he confronts the Church as its Lord. I do not wish to varnish over the necessary distinctions which a more extended treatment of this Lordship will entail. I do wish to insist that no such distinctions be permitted to mitigate the radicalism of faith's claim that Christ has subjected all things to himself, that "the kingdoms of this world" are in truth "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ". That is why the preoccupation of philosophical theology with "the world" does not imply that it is defined as a discipline by two distinct poles. The Gospel and the world are not ultimately polar, but are related as the center of a circle is related to its circumference. There is only one center for theology, and that is the center which God Himself has posited in His own self-disclosure, God's mighty act in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The integrity of the Gospel depends upon keeping center and circumference distinct, not permitting a point on the circumference to usurp the center position and insisting that it is the center which defines the position of the circumference. But the concrete circumference of Christ's Lordship embraces all that men do and dream and think in the advancing present of history; to repudiate anything on this vast perimeter as intrinsically alien to Christ, not embraced in his lordship, is in fact to repudiate the center itself. Therefore, without ceasing to be a genuine dialogue with a standpoint other than its own, faith's quest for understanding is first and last a quest for self-understanding.

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[1] Of course, the lines between the theological disciplines are clear only in abstract definition. All these disciplines are in fact within the Church, and each exists for the purpose of edifying the Church and thereby edifies all the others. The Church, after all, is the locus of the double movement here described. While a theological discipline may abstract from the Church's total situation, every thrust within any discipline toward the concreteness of that totality breaks down the disciplinary divisions.

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I suppose it is pretty obvious that the hegelians and anti-hegelians have already made their presence felt in the foregoing. I have not simply been defending the dialectic and dialogic function of philosophical theology, but have actually begun upon the particular dialogue in which we are here engaged.

But if philosophical theology is the sort of enterprise I have suggested, how can it be concerned with the men to be discussed here? I have emphasized the contemporary focus of my discipline. It is concerned with the situation of living men, whom it engages in serious conversation. One of the factors that makes the task so difficult, however, is that the movements which supply the main options for men of our age are so diverse and so insulated that the lines of communication between them are almost hopelessly clogged. As between the adherents of, say, neo-Reformation theology, scientific naturalism, Communist-style materialism, and philosophical or literary existentialism, there are not simply fundamental disagreements but actually lack of common grounds to which to relate their disagreements. As groups of people they are isolated from one another. Their respective analyses of the problem, their frames of reference, their aims, their values, have nothing in common and are insulated against one another. Refutations carried on from one standpoint against another are empty; every question is begged, because the claims of the other standpoint are thrust upon the procrustian bed of an essentially alien orientation. I say, Assuming the truth of A, then B is inadequate or downright false. You say, Assuming the truth of B, then A cannot be true. This is not refutation, even if we both rattle the table vigorously as we say it.

Nor can some conciliatory well-doer solve our problem by pointing out that we are dealing with different problems and using different methods, and that therefore our claims could be combined so long as each be regarded as/containing operational principles appropriate to their own limited range of phenomena. This can sometimes be true, as between, for example, scientific disciplines. But this will not do in the present case, because truth claims are involved in each position (not simply heuristic constructs), truth claims that cannot be relinquished by any party without a loss of seriousness. These people are not playing games, not simply dropping bright ideas into a common hopper in anticipation of an eventual committee decision. Each position has been wrought out of the slow, painful fires of experience, each claims ultimacy, each bears a prophetic word for the future of man. Nor is it helpful for some bright fellow in dark horn-rimmed glasses to suggest that our problem is largely semantic; for the words used express visions of what is and what ought to be that are genuinely different. Nor can we be content simply to go each his own way. These conflicting claims are not merely the subjects of seminar discussions or tea-time conversation; they constitute powers that rival one another for control over the souls of men (not to speak of their projection into the international crisis of our time). One can hardly exaggerate either the intractability or the seriousness of this impasse. The question of truth is at stake, and for a conviction of truth men will struggle and die.

In this situation, when the need for really fundamental dialogue is so acute while the possibilities for it seem so slim, many different modes of approach are necessary. No single stroke can solve the problem, and a graduate student's grand essay is of all things perhaps the least likely instrument for jarring a contending world to its senses.

The usefulness of the present study, however, has been suggested by the discovery (an unoriginal discovery to be sure) of a happy accident of history: that several prophetic voices of vast influence in some of our most divergent contemporary movements were raised originally within a succession of quite direct continuity. These "prophets" did their decisive work during the first half or so of the nineteenth century. All save the one hypnotic Dane were Germans, though the influence of each - with the same exception - very soon spread far beyond his native land. In particular, all of them thought in quite direct relation to the philosophical monument of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, though his successors dealt with here were at once hegelians and anti-hegelians.

Karl Marx and Søren Kierkegaard are the acknowledged fathers of two of our most pervasive schools of thought - much to the posthumous chagrin, we may be sure, of the latter. Roughly a third of our current world population call themselves "Marxists", while Marx figures heavily in the thinking of many social, political, economic, and even theological thinkers who are able to acknowledge his importance voluntarily. While

Kierkegaard's influence has not been so "world-historical" - that would really be too much! - yet in Western intellectual circles so many claim descent from him, from so many diverse corners are "existentialist" noises heard, that the very term "existential" has become so broad that it has lost much of its edge. In fact his influence has spread so far beyond any single school in recent years that his worst fears have been realized: he is now given a paragraph in almost everyone's system. International Kierkegaard Fellowships are now to be had for study under the current docents at the University of Copenhagen.

David Friedrich Strauss and Ludwig Feuerbach have, in a different way, been only slightly less influential. Their causes have so passed into the common intellectual currency that their work hardly seems distinctive anymore. In their own time they enjoyed enormous vogue, not only in continental Europe but in English-speaking lands as well, through the good offices of the novelist George Eliot as translator. By now their once-shocking manifestos have been so thoroughly assimulated as to have become axiomatic in many quarters. This infiltration has progressed so thoroughly that although their names are not heard prominently any more their fundamental perspectives are more or less recognizable in the utterances of every college sophomore. There is of course an historical question whether these men were genuine originals or whether they were the systematic spokesmen through whom the instincts of an age found voices. This is not to deny the direct and significant influence of Strauss upon modern Protestant liberalism and Feuerbach upon modern naturalistic humanism and what may be called inter-personal existentialism ("I and thou"). But even beyond these clear influences: to read these men is to hear plainly, at last, the voices which one has tried vainly to distinguish from between the lines of countless books, addresses, magazine articles scholarly and popular, and even sermons. Their ideas have enjoyed the immortality of becoming cliches; but for that very reason it may be useful to examine them in the original form.

Hegel's influence is of many different kinds, and is so enormous as to constitute a kind of pervasive natural force in our varied intellectual habitats. He is not really one of "the prophets" of whom I spoke earlier. He is Moses. The great vogue of hegelianism as such does seem, it is true, to have passed, after dominating much of the philosophy of England and America as well as Europe for the better part of a century. There are still philosophers to be found on whose philosophical coats of arms the name "Hegel" is prominently displayed, and there are philosophical historians who can still shed tears at the utterance of the mighty name. Despite occasional hints by such folk that a Hegel renaissance is in the making, however, it is difficult to believe that hegelianism as such will ever regain anything like its previous hold on the philosophical and theological world. But Hegel has always been much more than the father of a school. It is only a slight exaggeration to say that Kant and Hegel, between them, defined the form in which the basic intellectual and - in a broad sense - "spiritual" questions have been raised in the West since their day. At least it is impossible for anyone who has devoted intensive study to these two men to take very seriously the work of any philosopher who has not. Furthermore, their methodologies and even some of their results continually crop up even in quarters which are apparently quite remote from explicitly kantian or hegelian camps. This is nowhere more true than in Protestant theology. Even the most anti-speculative theologians can leave us agog occasionally with long passages that remind one irresistably of the mode of approach and sometimes the very propositions of the greatest modern speculative philosopher. Finally, I think we are now sufficiently removed from Hegel in time to say without being too rash that he is not merely an intellectual leader of a limited era. Of course I cannot predict whether there will be self-professed "hegelians" a millenium hence, as there have been "platonists" for more than two; I am inclined to doubt it, just because Hegel was so much more explicit and "complete" than Plato was, or even Aristotle. But surely Hegel, and Kant, have joined the small handful of men whose major works will continue to be read so long as there are people with really serious philosophical interests.

I have sketched the influence of these men in order to justify discussion of them in an essay in philosophical theology. Their fundamental problems are still ours, and their solutions are still live options. One can discuss these thinkers with one's mind on the contemporary scene. I do not mean to suggest that the discussion of their work is the same as dialogue with our contemporaries, or that it is a thoroughly adequate substitute. None of them has in fact quite passed into scripture for anybody. Men, for example, who appeal against a policy of Khrushchev's on the basis of the doctrine of Karl Marx do not last long in the Soviet Union. Still, consideration of these nineteenth century thinkers in their relation to one another seems to me to be one fruitful approach to some understanding of and dialogue with our own generation. Therefore, since this is the motive for the study, I do not propose to engage in a merely historical tabulation of ideas. While the organization of my essay will be historical, the intent will be critical and constructive throughout. With an eye to contemporary options and conflicts, I shall be trying to work toward a systematic understanding.

These thinkers grasped the fundamental problem of modern man under the general rubric of "alienation" or "estrangement" (Entfremdung). Man is alienated from his true nature and destiny, alienated from the ultimate reality of things, or from God. He does not exist in his truth. Such an inclusive statement of the problem is of course hopelessly ambiguous; but its specification is quite different in the thought of each of these thinkers. There are also crucial differences in their respective doctrines concerning the reconciliation (Versöhnung) of this estrangement. I shall try to exhibit these differences, and suggest what seems to me to be the significance of them. I believe that these differences define the basic issues between them more precisely than do the rather facile distinctions between "idealist", "materialist", "supernaturalist", etc. Moreover their divergence at these points decisively condition their respective relations to the Christian Gospel, to the claim that man's ultimate alienation is from God and that man's ultimate reconciliation is effected in Jesus Christ, the God-man in history. Whether they considered it their task to justify this claim or considered it their duty to deny it, the Gospel was a sore spot for all of these thinkers. What is to be made of the claim that this particular individual, Jesus, is the Savior of all men in every time and place? In particular, how can this attribution respecting a particular individual be squared with a universal dialectic of alienation and reconciliation? Can Jesus of Nazareth be the true content of "christology"?

Although I shall show how each of our thinkers deals with this cluster of problems, in a more important sense the whole essay will be devoted to a critical examination of Hegel's approach to it. The other men will be discussed in relation to him. Their contributions will be used, not only for their own intrinsic interest, but also to exhibit certain special features and problems in his program. Simultaneously, I shall be using the whole discussion to develop, progressively, some alternative conclusions of my own. Whether the glory of God will also be served by my rigging this nest of boxes, I cannot say.

I. HEGEL'S EARLY DISCOVERY OF THE PROBLEM

I have mentioned the problem which the nature of the Gospel's claim made for Hegel and his immediate successors. I shall try to define the character of this problem more precisely, in relation to Hegel's own early theological writings; for it appears to me that the nature of the problem appears more clearly, or at any rate more simply, in these writings than anywhere else. I don't pretend, though, to offer a detailed interpretation of these essays as such, even though they do have an inherent interest of their own and even though they anticipate in a most remarkable way some of the leading themes treated by the men whom I shall be discussing later on in the essay. These writings have received quite a remarkable amount of attention in the last half-century or so,[1] and I have nothing to add so far as their total interpretation is concerned. Besides, these writings do not belong to the real body of Hegel's philosophy, with which I am concerned. Hegel used to refer ironically to the fact that Schelling had carried on his studies in public, and prided himself on his own reserve in that matter. I think he was well advised not to publish theme early essays. They are important for those interested in intellectual biography, but if they had not been written by the man who was later the author of the Phenomenology and the Logic they would scarcely merit much attention. Still, the problem of positivity and alienation arises here, and it is useful for our purpose to discuss these writings by way of introduction; for certain facets of the problem appear more clearly here, where the problem is still a vexation for Hegel, than in the later works when he considered that he had solved it. The tentative efforts to solve the problem during this youthful period can also provide some illumination into the nature of the final solution.

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[1] Various of these works, in English and in German, are cited in the bibliography to the Kroner-Knox translation of Hegel's Early Theological Writings. Dilthey's Die Jugendgeschichte Hegels (Berlin, 1906), has hardly been excelled. Marcuse devotes the first chapter of Reason and Revolution to an admirable summary of their leading motifs. Kroner's introduction to the translation also provides some useful notes. In addition there is a Ph.D. dissertation by Cornelius Loew devoted to the topic, The Development of the Idea of Estrangement in Hegel's Early Writings (Columbia, 1951), which I understand Dr. Loew is developing for publication in some form.

i. A Young Kantian Discovers the Positivity of the Christian Religion

When Hegel first became interested in philosophy, Immanuel Kant was an old man. The setting sun of Kant's philosophical work filled young Hegel's horizon. Even during his years as a theological student at Tübingen, when he formed a triumvirate of rebellion with Schelling and Hölderlin, he was influenced chiefly by his extra-curricular studies in the ancient Greek philosophers and Kant. Although we do not know an enormous amount about Hegel's early years, the thought of a lad not yet twenty somewhat surreptitiously reading the Kritik der reinen Vernunft conveys a great deal about the character of the thinker with whom we have to do. Hegel was only eleven years old when the first edition of Kant's masterpiece was published, but by the time he was twenty he was a kantian. The extent of this discipleship to Kant is apparent in the outrageous "Leben Jesu" which Hegel wrote during this period.[1] The theologically educated Hegel venerated Jesus, and therefore assumed that Jesus must have spoken the truth despite the garbled accounts of the four evangelists. The truth, of course, was Kant's moral philosophy.

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[1] This essay is found in Hegels theologische Jugendschriften: nach den Handschriften der Kgl. Bibliothek in Berlin, herausgegeben von Dr. Herman Nohl; Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, Tübingen, 1907, pp. 73-136. The other writings we shall be discussing in this chapter are also found in this volume; though this essay, unlike the others, is not included in the English translation.

So we find that Jesus was also a kantian, even to the point of uttering paraphrases of the categoreal imperative that only narrowly escape outright plagiarism.[1] The treatise opens, indeed, with a proposition that carries kantianism somewhat beyond Kant: "Pure Reason free of all limits is the divinity itself. . ." Pure reason, of course, means the universal structure of moral rationality, embodied in the pure practical reason of every man. Young Hegel continues:

> The plan of the world in general is therefore ordered according to Reason; it is reason which teaches man to know his destiny, an unconditioned purpose of his life; it is indeed often obscured, but yet is never entirely extinguished. . . .[2]

Practical Reason is an objective structure, not merely a subjective possession. Nevertheless it is man's own, inherent in his nature in virtue of his rationality. This uniting of the subjective and the objective, the universal and the individual in Reason is a consideration of the utmost importance in Hegel's early work - and in much altered form in his mature work as well. Furthermore, this pure Reason is the divinity! True religion in its genuine form, then, is man's inherent possession, proper to his own nature. Indeed, its object is embodied in man's own nature.

The debt to Kant is equally apparent in an essay written a little later, in 1795-1796 ("Das Leben Jesu" was written during the Spring and early Summer of 1795) when he was twenty-five years old, entitled "Die Positivität der christlichen Religion". Hegel's standpoint is fundamentally that of Kant's Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft, published a couple of years earlier. Hegel declares his fundamental norm at the outset:

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[1] See especially the improved version of the Sermon on the Mount which Hegel puts into Jesus' mouth. Ibid., pp. 82-88.

[2] Ibid., p. 75.

> . . .the basic principle to be laid down as a foundation for all judgments on the varying forms, modifications, and spirit of the Christian religion is this - that the purpose and essence of all true religion, our religion included, is human morality, and that all the special teachings of the Christian religion, all means of propagating them, and all its obligations to believe and to observe practices otherwise arbitrary in themselves, have their worth and their sanctity appraised according to their close or distant connection with that aim.[1]

The hands are young Hegel's, but the voice is clearly that of the aged sage from the north. Religion is essentially morality, in accordance with rational duty.

In his late and - compared with his other works in point of style - amazingly prickly and spirited book on religion, Kant declares this same proposition repeatedly, in a dozen different ways. It is only by "good life-conduct", disinterested obedience to the rational moral law, that a man can be well-pleasing to God; everything else that goes under the name of religion is "mere religious illusion and pseudo-service of God".[2] This principle is taken to be virtually self-evident, requiring no proof because rooted in man's rational nature itself. Without attempting to review Kant's whole performance, it is to our purpose to note that this principle results in a distinction between two general types of religion. The first, the true religion, he calls natural religion, though of course not in the usual seventeenth and eighteenth century sense which he and Hume had discredited. This natural religion is grounded in man's own practical reason, religion which is obedience to duty in the sense of the categorical imperative, regardless of consequence or reward. This religion involves a moral faith in the objective moral order and its eventual triumph, a faith that the universe is ordered on principles in accord with the unconditional command, a faith that a good act is not an arrow shot into the darkness. This faith is at the heart of Kant's so-called moral argument for God's existence, as the sovereign presiding over a universal moral kingdom. But this universal kingdom is itself founded on man's unconditional reverence for his duty, regardless of immediate or ultimate results. But opposed to this natural religion, which is based on moral grounds which enjoy rational necessity, there is revealed, or clerical, or ecclesiastical, or historical religion, the grounds of which are largely arbitrary. Kant acknowledges some validity in this latter form as a stop-gap measure, a preliminary to the ethico-religious commonwealth. But this revealed religion is based on commandments and supposed divine disclosures that do not pretend to be rational, are not accessible to all men in virtue of their rationality but are accessible ohly through events that are contingent at best and of doubtful authenticity at worst. Further, this religion is developed and codified in a particularistic human movement, a church in the sectarian sense, where special priestly interests prevail. Suffering as it does from such arbitrariness, many of its features are not only irrelevant but pernicious, because it obscures true moral faith, robs it of its ultimacy. Its cultus, its prayers, become efforts to win favors from God quite apart from moral excellence; it therefore mocks God's moral purpose in the world. Kant has traditional Christianity especially in mind, of course, with its doctrines of grace and atonement, its employment of special rites and sacraments as means of grace. All this means to Kant that a select group of men can be blessed without being good, a doctrine utterly subversive of God's true intent, which is that men should form an ethical commonwealth based on universal practical reason. The very basis of this ecclesiastical faith is merely contingent; it is founded on certain books accounted sacred, an historical record of contingent events, certain authorities. It cannot claim that its principles or even its ultimate object must be so and cannot be otherwise; but can only assert that what it says somehow is so. But "pure" faith, obedience to the categorical imperative, is grounded "wholly upon reason, can be accepted as necessary and therefore as the only one which signifies the true Church".[1]

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[1] "Die Positivität der christlichen Religion", in the Nohl edition of Hegels theologische Jugendschriften, p. 153; see also pp. 166, 175. This essay is translated in Hegel, Early Theological Writings; translated by T. M. Knox, with an Introduction, and Fragments translated by Richard Kroner, (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1948). Since the editors followed the useful practice of providing the corresponding page-numbers from the Nohl edition in brackets, it will not be necessary to cite the English edition.

[2] Kant, Immanuel, Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft, IV, part 2, §2.

Young Hegel adopts essentially the same standpoint. The distinction between the two types of religion appears in "Die Positivität der christlichen Religion" as the distinction between a rational "virtue religion" and "positive religion", "positivity" meaning the character Kant found objectionable in revealed religion. But young Hegel thought that something like the "virtue religion", Kant's ethico-rational commonwealth, had actually if briefly seen the light of day. For Hegel's wistful attraction to Greece and Rome before the days of empire was assimulated to his kantianism. In his classicist imagination, Citizens of Greek and Roman democracy were free men for whom the objective forms of religion and government were genuine expressions of their own moral subjectivity, i.e. of the light of practical reason in every man.

> As free men they (the Greeks and Romans) obeyed laws which they gave to themselves, obeyed men whom they themselves had appointed to office, waged wars on which they had themselves

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[1] Ibid., III, part 1, vii. Moral faith in this sense, not the "ecclesiastical" faith of traditional religion, is what Kant had in mind in his famous remark in the Preface to the second edition of the Kritik der reinen Vernunft (B xxx): "Ich mußte also das Wissen aufheben, um zum Glauben Platz zu bekommen. . ." That proper knowledge is restricted to empirical "objects" (which are not noumenal realities, things in themselves) has the effect of freeing the non-empirical from the inroads of speculative "knowledge, which has been shown to be spurious. God, freedom, and immortality must therefore be pursued through the moral route, as concerns of the practical reason, not objects of the theoretical reason. Hence the possibility of a realm of "faith", a "leeren Platz" at the summit of our quest for knowledge, to be fulfilled by Reason to be sure, but practical Reason - the universality of moral Reason, not speculative Reason. Ibid., B xxiv-xxxii, 339f.

> decided, spent their property and their passions, sacrificed their lives by the thousands for an end which was their own. They did not teach and learn but practiced in their actions the maxims of virtue which they could call entirely their own; in public as in private and domestic life each was a free man, each lived according to his own laws.[1]

Though this free man reverenced the gods and considered that they held power over his fortunes, they did not control him, did not legislate for him, could not manipulate his will, could not constrain him by arbitrary moral decrees. Reason, ingredient within his own nature and as such his own proper possession, could alone legislate for his will. Even then he was free to disobey; but as Kant had shown, he was nowhere more free and unconstrained than in his obedience. As for the gods:

> If a man clashed with these lords of nature and their power, he could set over against them his freedom and his own self. His will as "man" was free and obeyed its own laws; he knew no divine commands, or, if he called the moral law a divine command, the command was nowhere given in words but ruled him invisibly (Antigone).[2]

This emphasis on the individual's freedom did not mean that each man simply went his own way. Each man "lived according to his own laws", but the point is that these laws were also inherent in the "idea" of his state, the expression of what Hegel was later to develop as the Volksgeist. A man could immerse himself into the political, cultural, religious institutions of his people without losing his freedom, for these institutions were in fact the concrete embodiment of his freedom. The idea (Idee) of his state was the very purpose of "his world", a purpose to which he could give himself because it was his own. Freedom was not merely subjective, powerless, wistful, but potent to effect its own purposes in the institutional structures of his social life. "Confronted by this idea", says Hegel of the noble Hellene or Latin, "his own individuality vanished". That is to say, he became immersed in this "idea" in such wise that he was no longer concerned about his particular existence as such, was not for example interested in immortality as a prolongation of his life in its mere particularity. His life and his freedom were given an objective and continuing embodiment in the culture which expressed his own purposes.[1]

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[1] "Die Positivität der christlichen Religion", Nohl's edition of Hegels theologische Jugendschriften, pp. 221-222.

[2] Ibid., p. 222.

This view of freedom remained with Hegel, to be developed in his mature work. It is essentially kantian in its view that man's freedom is fulfilled, not frustrated, by moral obedience in compliance with the demands of his own reason; it preserves the unity of the individual and the universal in the practical Reason. But it goes beyond Kant, for better or for worse, in suggesting that freedom is not complete unless it has effective power over (or within) institutions and materials. This suggestion, only adumbrated in the early writings, was to have far-reaching implications later. Man's freedom is realized not only in the universality of Reason, but in the common structures of his social life; he is free only if his state, his property, etc. are really his own, extensions of his own subjecthood. When these are made into objects which oppose him as a restriction and an inhibition he loses his freedom and the institutions and materials become alien, spiritless, forbidding. They have become so many dead weights. This is an important dimension of Hegel's doctrine of alienation, the dimension which was especially taken over by Marx. In developing this doctrine of alienation, Hegel already makes explicit a theme that was only implicit in Kant's work. Indeed, alienation in this sense would not have seemed so important for Kant, so long as a man were not alienated from universal Reason. The crack has appeared which was to become an open breach between the disciple and his master. The break is not yet apparent, because in "Die Positivität der christlichen Religion" the theme of alienation is expressed in relation to positive religion, in the familiar kantian terms. Since Hegel did not realize the extent to which it was vitiated when related to his hellenic ideal, he still expresses his norm in Kant's moralistic form, as we have seen.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 222-223.

A positive religion, according to a definition given in a later re-working of the essay,

> is a contranatural or a supernatural one, containing concepts and information transcending understanding and reason and requiring feelings and actions which would not proceed out of the natural man, but only what stimulates the feelings forcibly and mechanically, and what constrains the actions through command and out of obedience, without any spontaneous interest.[1]

Positive religion, opposed in Hegel's mind to an alliance between the kantian natural religion and the idyllic Greeks, comes out pretty badly. It claims man's highest allegiance without being his at all. It is external, coercive, deriving its authority from special events, unique revelations, oracles, miracles, venerated personalities. It comes to the individual from the outside, without being convincing to Reason. It is thus a form of alienation; the devotee of a positive religion is alienated from himself, the slave of that which is not his own. He has cast his life at the feet of an alien power. It is true that Hegel is revolting, as Kant had before him, against an autocratic unity of Church and State that ruled the spiritual and political affairs of the people in a manner quite unresponsive to the people's self-conceived interests. The two philosophers are revolting against the censorship, the power of state-appointed churchmen over the life of the university, and all the rest. But the critique cannot be reduced merely to their restiveness under that system. Positive religion - and the positive state - are being called into question in principle. And it is understood that Christianity is now a positive religion.

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[1] Ibid., p. 139. Parts of the essay were revised in 1800, with significant differences. But this definition from the later version certainly applies to the use of the term "positive" in the earlier.

"The fundamental error at the bottom of the church's entire system", young Hegel roundly declares, "is that it ignores the rights pertaining to every capacity of the human spirit (Geist), in particular to the chief of them, Reason." Kant has tried to restore by philosophical analysis the "sound intuition" of the Greeks, that the "moral commands of Reason" are not to be treated as the merely "objective rules with which the Understanding deals". Hegel is working in terms of the kantian distinction between Reason (Vernunft) and Understanding (Verstand): The Understanding grasps, in its own categories, the contingent external facts which are the concern of natural science; these are not "things in themselves", but they are the only proper objects of knowledge. However, when moral and spiritual truths are treated in the same way, as external and contingent facts grasped by the Understanding as something given, the delegation of powers which had been Kant's great achievement has been subverted. Just as Reason alone cannot determine matters of fact, the Understanding which is directed to given "objects" cannot be the medium of moral insight. Here "necessary, and universally valid laws" are needed, which Reason alone can legislate. These laws are not "objective" in the sense of being given to the moral subject without belonging properly to him, as are the arbitrary rules which are within the province of the Understanding (customs, conventions, etc. belong of course to the Understanding). The genuinely moral laws belong to the individual's own subjectivity, but are objective in virtue of belonging to the universal structure of Reason. But the Church, in appealing to an external objectivity of revelations and commands, has adopted a system of slavish rules, "a system which despises man".[1] This is alienation.

Most of Hegel's essay is devoted to an investigation of just how this has come about. It is axiomatic for him, as for Kant, that Jesus was a virtuous man who could not have intended things to turn out that way. These two men did not entertain Reimarus' notion that Jesus and his disciples were ambitious men who had organized a deliberate hoax; nor could they believe that Jesus was a fool or a fanatic. It was equally axiomatic that Jesus could not have been the Son of God in any unique sense.[1] He only wished to reveal what was accessible to the practical Reason of every man anyway. He was the teacher of a pure "virtue religion", still a convinced kantian, who sought to overthrow Jewish positivity in favor of a true religion of moral rationality. Jesus "undertook to raise religion and virtue to morality and to restore to morality the freedom which is its essence."[2] While Hegel tries to say it as gently and respectfully as possible, however, the fact seems to be that Jesus bungled the job. For the sake of expediency he had tried to combine the commands of true virtue with certain positive principles and practices. He recognized of course that the former were the essential, but since an appeal to the Jews on the basis of Reason alone "would have been the same as preaching to fish", Jesus accommodated himself somewhat to the preconceptions of his hearers. He tried to buttress the sheer rationality of his teaching by appeal to his own authority as a teacher; he was forced to speak about himself, "to demand faith in his person, a faith which his virtue religion required only for its opposition to the positive doctrines of Judaism".[3] He made use of the already existent Messiah concept, and did not contradict when people tried to apply it to his own person, because he hoped by this means to hold their attention so that he could "lead their Messianic expectations more into the moral realm".[1] Furthermore, many of his acts were construed by his unsophisticated observers as miracles, and this reputation as a miracle-worker served further to muddy the waters by concentrating attention upon the man rather than upon his message. The result was fatal.

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[1] Ibid., p. 211.

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[1] Kant probably spoke for the young Hegel in applying the traditional christological predicates to "die *Menschheit* (das vernünftige Weltwesen überhaupt) *in ihrer moralischen ganzen Vollkommenheit*"; it is this which proceeds from the substance of the Father, is the only-begotten Son, the Word in which all things are created, *etc.* Kant, *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*, II, part 1, a). Hegel was later to deny that Mankind or universal Reason in this simple, "abstract" sense is the content of christology; but the idea was by no means dead, as we shall see.

[2] "Die Positivität der christlichen Religion", Nohl, p. 154.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 158-159.

> . . . this detoured route to morality via miracles and the authority of a person, together with the many stations at which one has to stop along the way, has the defect of any detour because it makes the destination further away than it really is, and it may readily induce the traveler to lose sight of the road altogether in the course of his deviations and the distracting way-stations. (Furthermore) it violates the dignity of morality which, being independent, disdains any foundation outside itself, and insists on being self-sufficient and self-grounded.[2]

Jesus' compromises failed to achieve what he had intended anyway, because his disciples were unable to overcome the positivity with which their minds were infected and at length made Christianity into just another positive religion, centered in the divine authority of Jesus himself. Socrates had fared much better, because he had taught among the sophisticated Greeks and had been able to keep things in the proper perspective. His disciples had some originality of their own. Above all, "they loved Socrates because of his virtue and his philosophy, not virtue and philosophy because of him". Therefore his teaching was spared the fate of degeneration into positivity. Men could follow Socrates, and still be free.[3] Despite Jesus' intentions, it was not to be so among the Christians.

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1. Ibid., p. 160.

2. Ibid., p. 161.

3. Ibid., p. 163.

In this early treatise on Christianity, which bore such unmistakable marks of the eighteenth century, Hegel was launched on a line of reflection that was to dominate a great deal of nineteenth century philosophy and theology. He has discovered a basic problem that was to persist in his own thought and in the thought of those who followed: the positivity of the Gospel. Furthermore, in the concept of positivity Hegel has found the clue to the concept of alienation. But alienation is not yet a moment, the decisive moment, in the dialectical life of Reason itself. Alienation is simply irrational, dead, evil; and Christian man is alienated man.

ii. Hegel's Development of the Problem in Further Early Writings

Attention has often been called to the striking change which took place in Hegel's thinking between the original writings of "Die Positivität der christlichen Religion" in 1795-1796 and the writing of "Der Geist des Christentums und sein Schicksal" three years later, in 1798-1799. For the most part, the earlier work could have been written by any unusually bright young man at the peak of the Enlightenment and in the full flush of the kantian revolution. In the later work, and others written around the turn of the century, we are in quite a different intellectual world: we discover a distinctive thinker in his own right, who still belongs discernibly to the Enlightenment and Kant yet is sharply critical of both at a basic level, who has become a type of Christian mystic, who shows clear signs of becoming what we can only call an hegelian; or better still, who shows signs of being Hegel! There is in these pages the high drama of a thinker sifting his material and searching restlessly for a way of dealing with it, a key, a basic grasp of the whole. He is still far from the final formulation, yet his concerns have become more or less clear and his penetration into the issues has deepened.

Religious positivity is still regarded as an alienation. In the first section of the essay on the spirit of Christianity Hegel analyses the Jewish religion as lifeless and estranged, along lines already familiar but with some added nuances. The Jewish God is a particular, jealously demanding all glory for himself, set radically over against the world and man. All life is in Him. Therefore the Jews know themselves and their world as spiritless, dead, having no authenticity of their own. Furthermore, by its sectarian devotion to this God - sectarianism follows from the positivity of a religion - Israel is bitterly estranged from other nations. This estrangement leads to continual warfare, yet Israel knows no heroic deeds of its own (in the style of the epic Greeks), but knows only that God has smitten the enemy and takes a mean pleasure in this knowledge.[1] There is neither bravery nor compassion, neither beauty and nobility nor genuine tragedy. The Jews are simply slaves, having nothing they can call their own and having only servility, not loyalty, to that which is above them. They are soulless, without truth. Not even God is truth for them.

> . . . for the truth is something free which we neither master nor are mastered by; on this basis the existence of God appears (to the Jews) not as a truth but as a command. On God the Jews are dependent throughout, and that on which man depends cannot have the form of truth. Truth is beauty intellectually represented, the negative character of truth is freedom.[2]

So far we are on fairly familiar ground.

But now Hegel can no longer commend, in opposition to this religious positivity, the moral universality of the kantian standpoint of Reason alone. No, Hegel has taken a very great step toward the mature dialectic: Universality, even universal Reason, when set over against the particular, becomes particular itself. It is not the "one" in which the "many" are overcome, embraced, reconciled; rather, the universal one is left to stand outside the many, i.e. becomes one of the many, estranged from the others as they are estranged from one another. Specifically, Hegel sees the kantian categorical imperative as but another form of alienation. The universal command is scarcely less positive than the Jews' divine "laws", for all its rationality, because it still stands in harsh opposition to man's own free nature and inclination. Reason, after all, is not the only element in human nature; it can simply be a constraint on man's will, a burden which opposes him. Kant had made the point that there is no difference in principle between the Shaman of the Tungus, the Voguls, and the European prelates and Connecticut puritans, since they are all obeying external commands which do not make them "better men", i.e. which have nothing to do with rational moral universality.[1] But now Hegel thinks that Kant did not carry this fine impartiality far enough. The real difference between all these religious positivists "and the man who listens to his own command of duty" is not

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[1] "Der Geist des Christentums und sein Schifksal", Nohl's edition of Hegels theologische Jugendschriften, p. 249. This essay is translated in the Kroner-Knox edition as "The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate". See note no. 1, p. 18 above, on pagination.

[2] Ibid., p. 254.

> . . . that the former make themselves slaves, while the latter is free, but that the former have their master outside themselves, while the latter carries his master in himself, yet at the same time is his own slave. For the particular - impulses, inclinations, pathological love, sensuousness, or whatever else it is called - the universal is necessarily and always something alien and objective.[2]

The kantian ethic simply internalizes the opposition between human nature and an alien God into an opposition within human nature itself.

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[1] Kant, Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft, IV, part 2, § 3. Even if they happen to do the right thing they are still not moral, because they do it for the wrong reason. Good acts accidently done do not equal the good will.

[2] "Der Geist des Christentums und sein Schicksal", Nohl, pp. 265-266; see also p. 268. Hegel is clearly anticipating his later distinction between the true and false infinite.
Here and later, my citing of some of Hegel's complaints against Kant without comment does not necessarily imply that I consider the complaint decisive, or even fair to Kant. But our interest here is in Hegel's way of thinking.

Reason is set against inclination, a universal element against all particular elements, so that the alienation has simply become self-alienation, no reconciliation at all.

Hegel is no longer trying simply to set the irrational and merely particular aside. He wants to find some reality in which the infinite, the rational, the immutable, can find itself in its apparent opposite. He wants a unity which will be concrete, a harmony of the universal and the particular. But if Reason in Kant's sense is an abstract universal, alienated from the particular, then what else can be this reconciling reality? This is the question we find Hegel restlessly pursuing during this period. He experiments with various concepts, life, love, being, spirit, *etc.*, but in all these experiments the purpose is the same: to find not merely an all-embracing concept, an abstraction, but a substantial unity of things, a mystical interpenetration. Thus in the fragment on "*Die Liebe*"[1], love is said to be the unity which overcomes all separateness as such; *i.e.* love unites life with life in such a way that although the lovers remain distinct from one another they are no longer foreign to one another, no longer in opposition to one another, no longer mutually limiting, as mere objects are. Lovers are no longer "objects" to one another, but known as subjects akin to one another in which each fulfills the other. The one, the lover, does not annihilate his beloved, but finds himself in the beloved, and thus the "otherness" of the other as such is removed. Since love removes all oppositions, it is no longer merely a finite relationship (finitude implies mutual limitation, opposition). Such infinitude cannot be claimed for the Understanding, nor even for Reason, since the Understanding relates its terms as a manifold and Reason opposes itself to that which it determines. But when love is complete there are no more hostile powers within it, i.e. inhibiting it. Insofar as one of the lovers persists in possessing something exclusively his own, of which the beloved cannot partake, then their love is not complete because this "something" becomes a dead thing not brought into the living organism of their love, and this dead thing threatens the living. With whichever of the concepts Hegel happens to be dealing in his quest for the concrete unity, it is always clear that reconciliation must be found in living subjecthood. That is estranged which remains merely an object - an "it" in current parlance - severed from such subjecthood. There is in fact a merely dead aspect of things, states and conditions which inherently resist life, love, unification with another. Yet that which is estranged is not so because it is given externally to life or love in the first instance; for the external can be assimilated, can become the internal. The estranged is rather the unassimilable, or at any rate that which resists assimilation.

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[1] "Die Liebe", Nohl's edition of *Hegels theologische Jugendschriften*, pp. 378-382. This fragment is translated in the Kroner-Knox edition as "Love". See also the fragment on "Liebe und Religion", Nohl, pp. 377-378 (not translated).

This subtle view of estrangement results in a consciousness that positive religion is not inherently estranged simply because it is not posited by Reason alone. Indeed, Reason as such is itself estranged. Both the abstract universality of Reason and the sheer particularity of positive religion are forms of alienation because they make exclusive claims, and hence make themselves unassimilable. But this new penetration into the nature of alienation brings Hegel to quite a drastic revision of his earlier thoughts on Christianity.

Jesus, in particular, has been up-dated. He is no longer a kantian, no longer the teacher of "virtue religion" as such. He is still stoutly opposed to Jewish positivity, but wisely by-passes the abstract universality of the moral law as an alternative. Jesus is now a teacher and an embodiment of the reconciling love between men and between the divine and men. As against Jewish law, he still teaches virtue, but now virtue is only a moment in love, a moment fulfilled in love in such wise that all its moralistic one-sidedness is removed.[1] In a spirited interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount, Hegel shows how love fulfills the Law by rendering it "wholly superfluous", by reconciling men to one another rather than condemning, by evoking life rather than putting to death.[2] Love does not treat the transgressor as though he were defined essentially by his transgression; the transgression, far from being his whole, is a wrenching asunder, a violation of himself because it is a violation of life. But love recalls him to himself again, love does not try to fix him in the posture of this non-self, but, as life itself, appeals to the life in him, treats him as a man, evokes his essential spirituality. Now, this is the sense in which Jesus presumed to forgive sins. Within this plenitude of life and "not outside of nature"

> . . . Jesus found the cohesion between sin and the forgiveness of sin, between alienation (Entfremdung) from God and reconciliation (Versöhnung) with him. . . he posited reconciliation in love and the fullness of life. . . . Where he found faith, he used the bold expression: Thy sins are forgiven thee. This expression is no objective cancellation of punishment, no destruction of the still subsisting fate, but the confidence which recognized itself in the faith of the woman who touched him, a heart (Gemüt) like his own, read in it her heart's elevation above law and fate, and declared to her the forgiveness of sins.[3]

With this interpretation Hegel has taken an important step toward depositivizing Christianity, at least in its original intuition. Jesus' act of forgiveness was not merely a "positive" act committed on the basis of his own divine authority alone upon an existence essentially severed from its life. The woman can be forgiven by Jesus because of a capacity in her own nature; she has "a heart like his own". Hegel continues, making his point more explicit:

> . . . . Faith in Jesus means more than knowing his real personality, feeling one's own reality as inferior to his in might and

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1. "Der Geist des Christentums und sein Schicksal", Nohl, p. 295.

2. Ibid., pp. 269ff.

3. Ibid., p. 289.

> strength, and being his servant. Faith is knowledge of spirit through spirit (Geistes durch Geist), and only like spirits can know and understand one another.[1]

The mysticism of Hegel's love-ethic has begun to come clearly into view. Love is a recognition of likeness of spirit, which is therefore able to call life into unity with itself. Faith accepts the recognition, knows itself as one in spirit with its object. In this sense and in this sense alone is to be understood the Church's witness to the divinity of Christ. Jesus is indeed divine, the Son of the Father. But matter cannot recognize spirit, the dead cannot recognize the living. If Jesus is known as divine, he is known as such only in virtue of the likeness of spirit between himself and the believer. Thus Hegel paraphrases Jesus' reply to Peter's confession in Matthew 16: Peter says "Thou art the Christ etc." and Jesus replies, among other things,

> 'My Father in heaven hath revealed this to thee,' i.e. the divine that is in thee has recognized me as divine; thou hast understood my essence, it has echoed in thine own.[2]

This is no isolated passage. On the same page Hegel has explained that

> Faith in the divine is only possible if in the believer himself there is a divine element which rediscovers itself, its own nature, in that which it believes.[3]

The believer is not illuminated by an alien fire; rather "his own inflammability takes fire and he burns with a flame that is his own." Nevertheless a distinction is still posited in faith between God and the self, even though the essential unity is at least unconsciously discovered. Faith is thus a "middle state between darkness. . . and a wholly divine life of one's own. . ."[4] So faith is only a stage preliminary to mystical participation in the divine; but the participation is implicitly presupposed in it already as the condition for any relation to the divine at all. This means that there is no difference in essence between Jesus and those who believe in him; what they see in him they are themselves.[1]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., pp. 313-314.

[3] Ibid., p. 313. Again, "faith in the divine grows out of the divinity of the believer's own nature; only a mode (Modifikation) of the deity can recognize it."

[4] Ibid.

Yet so long as the believer is limited to faith, e.g. sees divinity only in Jesus and not in himself as well, he has not grasped the full plenitude of life. Jesus knew that his followers must progress beyond faith in him to identity of being with him. Hence the prophecies of his own death and the subsequent coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had brought his disciples to the point from which they could move on to blessedness, to that one true religion which is the divine life itself. But having brought them to this point of departure - to the stage of faith - Jesus' personal presence had now become a barrier to their further progress. So long as he was on the scene they would continue to be dependent on him, remain fixed on his individual self as the center of their spiritual life and therefore be prevented from claiming the fullness of the divine life in themselves. For the disciples "could not separate his essence from his person; they were still only believers." His person, that is to say, is a positive element which blinds them to the true nature of his essence: the universal divinity, the spiritual life in which they must participate as well. Therefore Jesus tries to convince them of the necessity for his death, his removal as an individual. And he prophesies the coming of the Comforter when he is gone. _I.e._:

> When you behold the divine no longer merely in me and outside yourselves, but have life in yourselves as such, then it will also come into your consciousness (_John_ 15:27) that you have been with me from the beginning, that our natures are one in love, and in God. - The Spirit will lead you into all truth (_John_ 16:13), and will bring everything into remembrance that I have said to you; he is the Comforter. . . . for everything you believe yourselves to have lost in me, you will discover

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[1] _Ibid._, p. 315.

in yourselves.[1]

The Kingdom of God is the fulfillment of this prophecy, the kingdom of love in which men are united with one another and with God in one spirit.[2]

Jesus had attempted to overcome Jewish positivity in this divine-human harmony of life. He taught that God is related to man as a father to his children: a teaching which Hegel takes to mean that men actually are of the stuff and lineage of their Father, *i.e.* are divine. Hegel opposes the Fatherhood of God in this sense to the Jewish consciousness of God as estranged from men, their absolute "Lord and Governor". Jesus had attempted to overcome the dead positivity of the Jews by denying the otherness of God: "Jesus was opposed to the Jews on the question of their Most High."[3] An existence in which men feel themselves separated absolutely from God, in which their morality consists in mechanical obedience to an external legislation, in which there is only the community of a sect and not a universal kingdom embracing all mankind in love: such an existence is dead, estranged. Jesus' religion was the religion of life as a concrete unity in which all things are embraced and all oppositions are overcome. Now, life in this sense is the divine itself![4] God is not alien to anything "living".

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[1] Ibid., p. 317. These Johannine passages concerning the coming of the Comforter continued to be decisive for Hegel's interpretation of Christianity; and he steadily held to the fundamental line of exegesis of these passages laid down here.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 321.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 302.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 302ff. See also the so-called "Systemfragment von 1800": ". . . out of that which is mortal, transitory, infinitely opposed to itself (and) at war with itself, this thinking life raises that which is living, imperishable, the relationship within the multiplicity (of objects) which is neither dead nor killing, not a (conceptual) unity, a relationship in thought, but all-living, all-powerful, infinite life; and it calls this God. . . ." (Nohl, p. 347; translated as "Fragment of a System" in the Kroner-Knox volume. This passage is found on p. 311 of the translation.)

But unfortunately the life-mysticism of Hegel's 1798-1799 "Jesus" fares little better than the virtue-religion of his 1795-1796 version. Once again there is a lapse into unreconciled positivity. Without tracing in detail how this lapse occurred, we may note the two main aspects of the situtaion which bent Christianity to a dead "fate": First, Jesus was thwarted by the soul-destroying "fate" of the Jewish world (and to some extent the pagan world as well). While his Kingdom could presumably embrace all things on its own terms, it could not embrace the stubborn adherence to death and estrangement which rejected his Kingdom. In view of the intransigent soullessness of the Jewish-heathen milieu, his religion of life could only set itself against "the world", i.e. become alien to the world, become one pole of an opposition. Thus, not by intention but by a tragic fate Christianity was limited by "the world" and hence infected with positivity. Accordingly Jesus' followers lived in harmony with one another, but their "life" was limited within the boundaries of a non-worldly sect, contained a corroding element of "death". Love was attained, but only in a limited way. It had not the "objectivity" of genuine religion, i.e. the embodiment in genuinely universal social forms. Hegel is still under the influence of the folk-religion of his idealized Greek polis, where the religion is embodied in the total society and its institutions. Love which cannot be so objectified is not yet true religion; it is Christianity's tragic fate that it cannot be so objectified. But there is a second weight that sank Christianity into positivity: Jesus' followers did not manage even after his death to overcome their preoccupation with him as a unique divine personage. They continue to venerate him as an individual, and not the universal divine life that was in him; even as resurrected and ascended they continue to imagine him subsisting as an individual. Jesus remains a positive element which keeps them from appropriating the divine life themselves.

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1. Ibid., pp. 323-342.

We have noticed in this section the significant deepening of the concept of alienation. The reconciling power - life, love etc. - is able to incorporate the positive oppositions; only what abides in its idiosyncratic particularity is lost. We have also noticed that Hegel has now discovered in the Gospel - with some assist from the new "identity philosophies" of Fichte and Schelling - a principle of life that surpasses the intellectualism of the Enlightenment and the moralism of Kant. This changed attitude is strikingly evident in a new redaction of portions of "Die Positivität der christlichen Religion" written in 1800. It is amazing that he thought the old essay could be patched up, when his outlook had evidently changed so thoroughly. Now he considers that the inquiry into the alleged "positive commands and doctrines of the Christian religion" in relation to "universal concepts of human nature and God's attributes is too empty" to be pursued any more.

> . . . the frightful chatter in this tone has, through its endless extention and inner vacuity, become so boring, has so utterly lost all interest, that the prior requirement of the age is perhaps to hear someone proving the very opposite of this enlightening application of universal concepts; it is understood that the proof of this opposite would not proceed on the principles and methods which the old dogmatics were provided by the culture of their age, but would derive that now discarded dogmatics from what we now know as a need of human nature and would thus exhibit its naturalness and necessity.[1]

This remark not only evidences the new attitude toward theology and Enlightenment respectively, but also points with remarkable clearsightedness toward the nature of his own future program.

A third aspect of these early writings which it is important for us to notice, however, is that he has not yet discovered the basic means by which he was to execute this program. He has not yet advanced to his new view of Reason, undergirded by the dialectical logic. "Life", "love", and the rest are characterized precisely by their opacity to thought, an opacity which he was later to see as another form of alienation. It is worth our trouble to linger on this point, since it illuminates the nature of Reason in the mature System: Young Hegel is not able, for example, to define the precise nature of the divine-human unity posited in his life-mysticism, any more than any other fundamentally mystical outlook can define this unity. The problem does not stem from an accidental vagueness in expression, but is inherent in the nature of the unity itself. Concepts, of course, can be "understood", and so can "objects" in their opposition to one another, because the opposition is abstract, dead. But the unity of opposites in life, love, spirit, eludes by its very concreteness the grasp of thought, and therefore frustrates thought's demand for a definition. For example, in his fragment on "Liebe und Religion" Hegel points out briefly the nature of the dialectic which crowns his early mysticism:

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[1] "Die Positivität der christlichen Religion", Nohl, p. 143. The revision of 1800 is published in the Kroner-Knox translation as Part III of the essay. In the Nohl edition it precedes the original text.

> Religion is one with love. The beloved is not opposed to us, he is one with our essence; we see ourselves only in him - and then again he is not we after all: a miracle which we are not able to comprehend.[1]

Reflection passes back and forth between the "yes" and the "no" of this dialectic without ever coming to rest, for the concreteness of truth, from the standpoint of reflection, is "a miracle". Reflection in ideas is opposed to "life", because it denies one thing in positing another - thus leaving both as dead "objects". No idea can be found which will grasp the harmony of things, because even the idea of harmony opposes itself to that which is not harmonized. Furthermore, the very "process of thinking. . . implies an opposition with the non-thinking as well as the opposition between the thinking mind and the object of thought." Philosophy of course has an important function, since Hegel's mysticism is not mindless. But philosophy "has to stop short of religion"; the oppositions posited in thought itself must be overcome. Philosophy can illuminate the problem, can recognize the oppositions, the finitude of things as such, and can posit the need for reconciliation. But it cannot grasp the reconciliation itself. Philosophy must "recognize the deceptions generated by its own infinite" - i.e. the abstract infinite which is opposed to the finite as idea is opposed to real objects, and is therefore limited by the finite, therefore is finite itself - and thus philosophy must "posit the true infinite outside its domain".[1] Hegel's mysticism, while not mindless, is not yet at heart intellectual.

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[1] "Liebe und Religion", Nohl, p. 377. (Not translated in the Kroner-Knox volume.)

Of course, it never became intellectual in the sense that its reconciliation could be embraced in "thought" as it is here understood. The harmonizing process of Geist continues to be opaque to "thought" in the sense of reflection, or the Understanding, or the practical Reason which merely grasps what ought to be. Hegel's mysticism, as much as any mysticism, continues to be impenetrable to thought in any of these senses. But Hegel considered that he had discovered a higher rational standpoint, the standpoint of Reason, which embraces the concrete unification of life - Geist - itself and manifests its fundamental rationality. This Reason is itself an impenetrable "miracle" to the Understanding. But if philosophy is at the standpoint of Reason, then religion is no longer a step beyond it.

How Hegel discovered this new basis is a fascinating chapter in intellectual history, but it is not to our purpose to trace this process. Our basic problem is now before us, and we are ready to turn to the solution proposed by the mature hegelian System: We shall try to "understand" the nature of that Reason which gave his mysticism its final formulation (though not, I hope, from the standpoint of the mere "Understanding"); we shall examine the view of alienation and reconciliation that has emerged in this new rational form; and we shall see how the Gospel fares in the process.

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[1] "Systemfragment von 1800", Nohl, p. 348.

II. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF REASON IN HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY

i. The Nature of Philosophical System

It is well-known that Hegel was the philosopher of "the System". Due in part to the present influence of the works of Søren Kierkegaard, "the System" has thereby become a term of abuse and derision in some circles. Leaving aside the possible inconveniences of trying to be a philosopher without some sort of system, however, it is important for our purposes to notice that Hegel intended something quite unique when he spoke of the System of Philosophy.

The construction of the System was for Hegel the attempt to think self-reflexively. Reason must be capable of thinking itself, or it cannot think anything else. Reason wishes to know the truth of all things, but it cannot know that which is irreconcilably other than itself. To be apprehended rationally a thing must be rational. For some purposes, e.g. in natural science, a thing may be used significantly as a mere datum without anyone's being reflective about its rational basis - though it could not be known at all if it were not in fact akin to Reason. But for a philosopher the thing must not only be rational, but must also be known as rational; he must show the manner in which it belongs to Reason. As we shall see in the next section, this does not mean that philosophy pays no attention to things in their immediacy. But things are philosophically, i.e. truly, appropriated only insofar as that which appropriates them is itself known as their ultimate ontological ground. So Reason's knowledge of itself is its crowning task. It is in one sense its final task, since it is this knowledge which completes Reason's investigation of all truth. In another sense it is its first task, because nothing can be known essentially which is not known as a mode of Reason. Reason's disciplined effort to know all things in itself is the philosophical System.

Thus the philosophical System cannot be constructed by inference from some special given material, such as sensory experience or oracular pronouncement or revelation unmediated by thought, or even from the _sum_ contained in _cogito_ itself. Upon any such datum or foundation, of course, a more or less coherent inferential scheme can be constructed, which may even attempt to account for all things in heaven or on earth in relation to its point of departure. But such a scheme would have at least one point which is not properly within it, namely its first point, its beginning, its point of departure. Thus the scheme would have its ultimate basis outside itself, would not be self-contained, internally verifiable. On Hegel's terms, those bodies of information or theory which are constructed by inference from an externally given point of departure are in fact forms of alienation, however usefully they may be employed. They are imposed upon thought, thought is not free in them, they do not belong to Reason itself. In dealing with them, thought must go outside itself, deal with a material foreign to itself, consequently thought is alienated from itself. That is why the true form of thought, thought "at home with itself", must be the self-reflexive System. For the System has no beginning, no point of departure outside itself.

There is no bridge into the System from the outside. It is true that the _Phänomenologie des Geistes_ seems to provide such a bridge, for we do begin with a given point of departure: we proceed from sense certainty as the most primitive givenness of immediate consciousness.[1] But just for this reason it is only a phenomenology, which

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[1] Hegel, _Phänomenologie des Geistes_, nach dem Texte der Originalausgabe, herausgegeben von Johannes Hoffmeister; Sämtliche Werke, neue kritische Ausgabe, Bd. V (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, sechste Auflage, 1952), pp. 79ff. See the English translation entitled _The Phenomenology of Mind_, translated with an introduction and notes by Sir James Baillie (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 2nd Edition, 4th Impression, 1955), pp. 149ff. Hereafter cited as "Baillie Tr."

> seems not itself to be free Systematic Science (Wissenschaft), self-moving in its own characteristic form, but may be taken from this point of view to be the pathway of the natural consciousness, which is pressing forward to true knowledge. . .[1]

It does not have the true form of the System itself, because in it thought does not deal strictly with its own content, but only with the "pathway" to its true content. Yet this pathway is not really a bridge into the System. Rather, it is the purpose of the Phänomenologie precisely to burn every such bridge behind it. It is the task of this work to show that every state of phenomenal consciousness - i.e. in which Reason deals with an object external to itself - is self-negating, necessarily, internally aufgehoben[2] by a state of consciousness more adequate to the form of Freedom characteristic of the System itself. When the form of Freedom is fulfilled, and thought in knowledge of itself knows all truth, then the state of absolute Knowledge is reached. Here all the bridges have been burned. The subject-object distinctions which have characterized every phenomenal state of consciousness (and which constitutes the estrangement, the internal instability, within each) is overcome. In each stage the distinction between the knowing subject and the object which is the locus of its truth has been aufgehoben, only to be posited again in another form. But absolute Knowledge, Systematic Science,

> does not contain this distinction and its Aufheben, but since each moment has the form of the Notion, it unites the objective form of the truth with the knowing self in an immediate unity.[3]

This does not mean that all distinctions are now "thrown back into the

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1. Ibid., pp. 66-67 (Baillie Tr. p. 135). The usual translation of "Wissenschaft" as "Science" is misleading, especially today when "science" generally means natural or social science. "System of Knowledge" is better, but "Systematic Science" is less cumbersome.

2. I shall use the German forms of the verb "aufheben" without underscoring (see Preface). Literally it means "to lift up", but it can mean both "to annul" and "to preserve". Hegel exploits this double meaning to indicate that something is nullified as such, but incorporated, in purified form, in a "higher" moment.

3. Ibid., p. 562 (Baillie Tr. p. 805).

abyss of the Absolute" in undifferentiated sameness. Systematic Science proper contains distinctions also, moments which are never simply dissolved. But these distinctions are now "determinate Notions" which belong to the inner structure of Reason itself. Having "attained the Notion", the self is in the realm of Systematic Science, which is the explication of its own true life as Geist.[1] But when this stage is reached phenomenology as such is left behind. The very nature of the subjects which it investigates has thrust it beyond itself into the System of Philosophy proper. Because this movement is necessary, the status of the phenomenology is peculiar, paradoxical in relation to the System.

> In virtue of this necessity this pathway to Systematic Science is itself already *Systematic Science*, and in accord with its content is the Systematic Science of the *experience of consciousness*.[2]

Accordingly, in the *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* which surveys the total System proper, "The Phenomenology of Geist" is given a place as the analysis of consciousness, with its subject-object distinction.[3] But in consciousness itself we are thrust beyond this distinction, and only as such is consciousness part of the System. For the System is the philosophical Geist itself explicating its own nature.

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[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 561-563 (Baillie Tr. pp. 804-806). "Geist" is the other German word which will simply be incorporated into the text as though it were an English word, without special underscoring. Again, all English equivalents are misleading. Its connotations include "mind" or "reason" or "intellect", and also "spirit", both in its religious meanings and in the sense of culture or cultivation or aspiration. But of course Hegel's use is not simply the general German usage, though it does play on all these connotations. Hegel's "Geist" is the knower of all truth, which is itself the truth to be known. Thus the term lies at the heart of the self-reflexive character of Hegel's philosophy. Ultimately it means the same as "Reason", but is to be preferred because it more clearly conveys the richness of connotation which Hegel intends.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 74 (Baillie Tr. p. 144).

[3] *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* (1830), neu herausgegeben von Friedhelm Nicolin und Otto Pöggeler (Hamburg: Verlag von Felix Meiner, sechste Auflage, 1959), §§ 413-439. Since the numbered paragraphs of this work are generally short I shall not cite page numbers or translations. However, I have made much use of William Wallace's translations of the first and third parts: *The Logic of Hegel* (Oxford University Press, 2nd Edition, 1892) and *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind* (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1894). There is also a new translation which I have not yet seen: *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, trans. by Dr. G. E. Mueller (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959).

So in principle there can be no "given" point of departure, no presupposed foundation, no starting point. Rather, as Hegel makes clear in an important section on "The Beginning of Systematic Science" in his large Logik, the System runs in a circle.

> The essential thing for Systematic Science is not so much that there be a beginning in pure immediacy, but that the whole System is a circular movement within itself, in which the first is also the last and the last is also the first.[1]

It is true that the exposition of the System begins, in the Logic, with the category of Being, which is the "pure immediacy". But to be the purely immediate is to have no determinate content of its own, to have no distinctions within itself and no distinctive character at all. And since the System as a whole occupies a position in which the distinction into otherness has been overcome ("pure knowledge . . . is that which is without distinction"), its essential character is correctly represented in the positing of this empty immediacy as its "starting-point".[2] But essentially considered the System could begin at any point on its far-ranging perimeter. One may speak of the beginning of Philosophy "only in relation to the person who decides that he wishes to philosophize, but not in relation to the Systematic Science as such." The true task of Philosophy is "to arrive at the Notion of its Notion, and thus secure its return and satisfaction."[3] The "beginning", Being, is in fact posited in its necessity only by the "end", by absolute Knowledge itself, because the Absolute is its "inner truth". The forward movement of the System, from Being through the Notion in the Logic, then through the Philosophy of Nature and the Philosophy of Geist, is at the same time "a backward movement into the Ground, to the original and true."[1] The fact that the beginning is posited by the end constitutes the necessity of the beginning. The fact that each moment in the System is logically posited by all the rest constitutes the necessity of each moment and of the System as a whole.

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[1] Wissenschaft der Logik, herausgegeben von Georg Lasson (Leipzig: Felix Meiner Verlag, unveränderter Abdruck 1951 des Textes der zweiten um eine vergleichende Seitenübersicht erweiterten Auflage von 1934), in two volumes, Vol. I, p. 56. This work has been translated by W. H. Johnston and L. G. Struthers under the title, The Science of Logic, in two volumes (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1929). I have not recently had access to this translation, and cannot cite it.

[2] Ibid., I, p. 54.

[3] Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften, § 17.

It is no embarrassment to Hegel that the conclusion of the Logic or of the total System is always given brief and rather sketchy treatment. When we arrive at the Absolute Idea at the end of the Logic, for example, we are not given any "senseless declamation" regarding this hard-won pinnacle, nor in fact are we given any really new content to be added to what has already been presented. Instead we are told that the content of the Absolute Idea is "the System of Logic" which we have just been through! Only now, having been through it all, we see all the moments, the Notions of the Logic, in their proper perspective, in relation to the total Method; we have "the specific consciousness of the value and currency of the moments" in the System's development.[2] Similarly when we reach the stage of Philosophy or absolute Knowledge at the end of the whole System: If one were to ask, "What, then, is Philosophy?" Hegel could only suggest that he begin all over again with the Logic and proceed through the System again. For Philosophy is not simply the conclusion of the System; it is the System in its total progressive unfolding, seen however as a self-related unity. Philosophy, as absolute Knowledge, is the Notion of every Notion in the System; it is every moment in its truth,

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1. Wissenschaft der Logik, I, pp. 55-56.

2. Enzyklopädie, § 237.

seen in its necessary relation to all other moments. Systematic Science is therefore the circle which returns into itself; indeed "this circle is a circle of circles" in which each moment contains this self-reflexivity and leads by a necessity immanent in its own Notion to the next.[1] Absolute Knowledge contains all truth, but contains it in the mode of the aristotelian concept of thought thinking itself.[2]

This self-reflexivity distinguishes Philosophy from all other disciplines. It is especially important for our purposes to notice that this necessity within Philosophy, which posits its own beginning rather than receiving it as something given, is what distinguishes it fundamentally from Religion.[3] In fact it also distinguishes Hegel's System, at least in the degree to which it is executed, from all other philosophical systems. In the Preface to the first edition of his Enzyklopädie[4] he expresses the hope that what is there presented will be recognized as a new treatment of philosophy, in which the Method is identical with the content. The System was his fundamental and original contribution to philosophical thinking. Of course the vast circle which the hegelian argument traverses in the effort to connect with itself is a very hazardous route. The argument cannot be said to have emerged unscathed from all its adventures along the way. Nevertheless, both in its conception and its execution, the System is a work of supreme intellectual beauty and speculative daring.

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[1] Wissenschaft der Logik, II, p. 504.

[2] Enzyklopädie, §§ 14-15, 17-18, 236-244, 574-575. The Enzyklopädie concludes with the quotation of the famous passage from Aristotle's Metaphysics, XII 7.

[3] Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie: Einleitung: System und Geschichte der Philosophie, vollständig neu nach den Quellen herausgegeben von Johannes Hoffmeister; Sämtliche Werke, neue kritische Ausgabe, Bd. XVa (Leipzig; Felix Meiner Verlag, 1940), p. 172. See the English translation entitled Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy, translated by E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simson, in three volumes (re-issued, New York: The Humanities Press Inc, 1955), I, p. 65. Hereafter cited as "Haldane Tr."
For another discussion of the "beginning" in Philosophy, in relation to Religion, see Vorlesungen Über die Philosophie der Religion, herausgegeben von Georg Lasson; Sämtliche Werke, neue kritische Ausgabe, Bd. XII-XIV, in four volumes (Leipzig: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1925-1930), I, pp. 79ff.

[4] Nicolin-Pöggeler Ausgabe, p. 20.

ii. Hegel's "Empiricism": Find the Reason in the Facts

Quite apart from the hazards involved in the details of the System, however, there arises the wider question whether such a circular System must not in the nature of the case be a track in an uninhabited wilderness. Granted that a self-reflexive System of mental operations could be constructed, there is a serious question whether it could have anything whatsoever to do with the experienced realities of the world. The System can provide knowledge of reality only if that Reason which is the source and goal of the System is the ultimate ontological ground of all reality. If this were a valid identification, then Reason could produce knowledge of the real - and not merely "regulative principles" in Kant's sense - which goes beyond any possible empirical material. But Kant had denied that such a claim can be sustained. This kantian denial implied a denial of the possibility of the System as such, and since the kantian form of this denial was the one with which Hegel had to contend in his effort to overcome it, it may be useful for us, briefly, to notice the nature of this form of the objection.

Kant did not simply maintain the empiricist objection to all a priorism. He went beyond Hume to maintain, with the rationalists, that knowledge has an a priori basis. The principles of science must have a basis which is necessary, not simply subjective and pragmatic. This a priori basis is found in the knower's own Understanding. The so-called "metaphysical" and "transcendental" deductions in the first two chapters of the Transcendental Analytic in Kant's first Kritik show how the categoreal principles of all knowledge can be deduced, first from the logical forms of thought, and then from the requirements for the possibility of experience in general. These formal, rational conditions necessary for any experience obviously cannot be derived from sense impressions as such, but according to Kant are derived from the Understanding of any experiencing subject. Thus the categories are necessary, a priori. Yet, even though sensuous "intuitions without concepts are blind", it is equally true that "thoughts without content are empty".[1] The a priori categories can advance knowledge, i.e. yield synthetic judgments, only insofar as they are applied to the givenness of the sensible material. With Hume and against the rationalists, then, Kant had argued that knowledge of reality is not deducible from concepts. The only proper knowledge we have is empirical, and empirical knowledge is "a synthesis of sense perceptions," which synthesis, however, "is not itself contained in the sense perceptions."[2] We derive knowledge from the sensory material as it is synthesized in relation to the categories of the Understanding. These objects are not things-in-themselves, as they may be outside this synthesized experience, but they are the only objects we can have, and nature as we know it is composed of such objects. But this is all the nature we need; science, dealing with "nature" in this sense, can build complete systems of knowledge, founded on principles of which there is a priori certainty. This knowledge is not merely "subjective", since it deals with objects which are the common property of all men; the categories are the thoroughly universal bases of experience. The distinction between subjective and objective is a distinction within experience.[3]

A result of this critique is that speculative knowledge becomes, as such, a contradiction in terms. Kant's Transcendental Logic has a priori categories, but because these are empty in the absence of sensible material, the Transcendental Logic can be a logic of truth only when it deals with the concepts and principles of the pure Understanding, as in Kant's own treatment of "*die transzendentale Analytik*". Its employment beyond these limits, where it treats concepts which are not related to objects of possible experience, converts it into a "logic of illusion;" significantly, in relation to Hegel, the discussion of this "logic of illusion" comes under the heading of "*die transzendentale Dialektik*".[1] Nor, of course, is the traditional logic of any use in expanding knowledge beyond empirical limits, since its propositions are entirely analytic, and can provide a mere *Kanon*, a mere negative criterion for knowledge; when treated as an *Organon* for the production of knowledge itself it falls into obvious illusion.[2] When concepts are applied beyond the limits of proper (empirical) knowledge, reason falls into irresolvable antinomies, mutually contradictory conclusions each of which is equally possible from the standpoint of proper knowledge and each of which is therefore equally doubtful.[3] Reason which is not bound at every step to objects of possible experience can yield only illusion; any claim to advance on its own basis beyond these limits can be only a "pseudo-rational (*vernünftelnde*)" pretention.[4]

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[1] Immanuel Kant, Kritik der reinen Vernunft, B 75.

[2] Ibid., B 218; see B 294, 303, 308f, 730.

[3] Ibid., B 237ff, 262ff, 280ff, 518ff.

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[1] *Ibid.*, B 87, 170, 309, 314. Already in his Inaugural Dissertation (*De mundi sensibilis atque intelligibilis forma et principiis*), § 24, Kant had declared that the most important rule of metaphysical method is: "sollicite cavendum esse, ne principia sensitivae cognitionis domestica terminos suos migrent ac intellectualia afficiant."

[2] *Ibid.*, B 85f, 308, 310.

[3] *Ibid.*, B 432ff.

[4] *Ibid.*, B 350ff, 397, 595f. While we are not concerned here with Kant's philosophy as such, in order to avoid one-sidedness we should notice that there is another danger on his terms, the opposide of "transcendental illusion". Kant also denies what we may call the "empirical illusion", that the boundaries of empirical knowledge are cogently to be regarded as the boundaries of all reality. There is a great deal which we cannot properly know, an area embracing morality and religion, to which Reason is related only in its practical employment. *Ibid.*, B 499 et passim.

However, as Stace says,

> the effect of this solemn warning upon the philosophic world was truly astonishing. No sooner had Kant thus cried 'Halt!' to philosophy than philosophy, forming its adherents into a sort of triumphal procession, proceeding, so to speak, with bands playing and flags waving, marched victoriously onward to the final assault, confident of its power to attain omniscience at a stroke, to occupy the very citadel of reality itself. And, strangest of all, this was to be done with the very weapons which Kant himself had forged.[1]

In fact, the position which philosophy sought to win against Kant was not its old one, which Kant had left in ruins; it had to advance to quite a new domain with these kantian "weapons". Hegel's program must not be confused with a rationalism of the pre-kantian type. Hegel was a post-kantian! Kant's critique of rational knowledge defined for him a point of no return. Indeed, despite the polemical character of most of his remarks about Kant, he built on substantially kantian foundations, at least to the extent that he accepted Kant's formulation of the basic problem of metaphysical knowledge as definitive.[2] "Philosophy" advanced through Kant, not over him.

Hegel accepted Kant's "copernican revolution", but considered that Kant had not carried it far enough. Kant had correctly seen that thought, and not raw sense-perception, is what is objective in knowledge, in virtue of its universality and necessity. But Kant had limited thought, insofar as it pertained to knowledge, to the Understanding, the categories of which are finite, abstract, in the nature of the case, vitiated by abstract antitheses: the Understanding is a fixed structure of thought forms which are irreconcilably opposed to one another. Furthermore, Kant's "object of knowledge", as an abstract composite of sensory material and antithetical thought forms, cannot be the ontologically real object. Therefore, charges Hegel, both "subjective" and "objective" in Kant's language are ultimately subjective abstractions, because the ontologically real has been left "on the other side" of knowledge, an impenetrable thing-in-itself. Actually the thought of Kant's predecessors had been vitiated by this same alienation of thought from its true object. It was assumed that the true object was in an "outside world" which thought must somehow penetrate; indeed it is of the very nature of the Understanding that the knowing subject is confronted by an alien object. Kant had taken the important step of making this alienation explicit, by showing that in this case thought cannot penetrate the thing-in-itself. But he had therefore denied the true objectivity of thought.

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[1] W. T. Stace, The Philosophy of Hegel: a Systematic Exposition (Dover Publications, Inc., 1955), p. 43.

[2] This point is convincingly made in relation to "onto-theology" by Dieter Henrich in his new book on Der Ontologische Gottesbeweis (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1960), pp. 194-219. Henrich shows that Hegel accepted Kant's critique of previous onto-theology, and in large measure accepted also Kant's formulation of what must be accomplished if onto-theology were to be re-constituted. This thesis is significant beyond the argument for God's existence as such, since Hegel considered the whole System to be a new version of the ontological argument.

> Thoughts, according to Kant, although universal and necessary categories, are only our thoughts - separated by an impassable gulf from the thing as it exists apart from our knowledge. But the true objectivity of thinking means that the thoughts, far from being merely ours, must at the same time be the real essence of the things, and of whatever is an object to us.[1]

This step would complete the "copernican revolution".

That thoughts are the real essence of things would certainly be "the true objectivity of thinking", but what can be the basis for making such a claim? Kant would argue that one must first investigate the faculties of knowledge to discover whether we are even in a position to assert any proposition at all on this level (regarding "the real essence of things") But how shall we investigate the power of thought? By means of thought. But then we are already thinking. To know the mind's power to know is already an act of knowledge. Therefore, to suspend knowledge until after we have investigated the mind's power to know is - at this point Hegel generally lets drop a favorite professor's joke - like refusing to venture into the water until one learns to swim. No, the only possible testing-ground of the power of thought is thinking.

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[1] Enzyklopädie, § 41 Zusatz, following Wallace's translation. See also §§ 25, 40ff.

> . . . thought is a definite form, which may not be presupposed, but [is] so constituted that it investigates and criticizes itself. It must therefore combine its activity and its critique in itself. They [the pure thoughts] must in themselves determine their limits and exhibit their errors.[1]

This investigation of the pure forms of thought - the categories - in their own essential development, is the task of the Logic. Of course thought's investagation of itself can tell us nothing about the truth which lies outside thought. But does truth lie outside thought? Hegel is justified in calling into question the assumption that the only genuine medium of knowledge is the Understanding, which posits the distinction between knowing subject and an external object. But what is the nature of the Reason which does overcome this opposition between subject and object? How does this Reason come to contain all the world's truth in itself?

I have shown in the previous section how the System is possible only if all truth is indeed contained in Reason. But this does not mean that Hegel's procedure is simply a priori. On the contrary, for Hegel it is a principle of the first importance that all knowledge is at the outset a posteriori. Philosophy does not produce the truth, but discovers it, in empirical, scientific, or historical facts. Contrary to a popular impression, Hegel did not philosophize in sovereign contempt for the cluttered detail of factual knowledge. Personally he was a man of encyclopaedic knowledge, an uhtiring collector of facts throughout his life. His books and lectures are full of them, indeed he was a knower of facts, historical and scientific, on a scale seldom surpassed, especially among modern philosophers. Nor is this passion for facts simply a peculiarity of Hegel's personal biography. It belongs essentially to his conception of the philosophical task. One suspects that the catalogues of facts in his books and lectures are generally the parts which are neglected by most readers, in favor of the more "philosophical" passages. But Hegel would have protested vigorously against the implication that philosophical material could be pursued apart from a painstaking sifting of factual detail. Part of his polemic against "subjectivism" hinges on the complaint that it overlooks simple factual objectivity. In order to be free, in order to attain true knowledge, a person must subject himself to the most rigorous abnegation, casting off private prejudices, special interests, personal theories. Of course, what any individual can accomplish is necessarily small when confronted with the vast ocean of possible knowledge; yet in principle he must think with the pure ideality of mind itself, universal mind, scientifically disinterested through and through, with a passion for nothing but knowledge. This freedom can come only through a dedication to the facts for their own sake. "So far as content is concerned, thought is only true insofar as it sinks itself in the facts." This concern with particular detail in point of content goes hand in hand with thought's universality in point of form, in which it frees itself from all personal, individual peculiarities to survey things from the standpoint of an "abstract self", exhibiting in its mental operations the universality "in which it is identical with all individuals".[1] Far from being subject to the charge of intellectual pride, the philosopher is in this sense "humble" to the point of self-obliteration. He is absolutely governed by his material. Of course the philosopher is not simply a collector, but a sifter of facts, whose aim is to discover the essential and true in the externality of the facts. As we shall see, "things as they immediately are have no truth." But Hegel no sooner utters this characteristic doctrine than he carefully qualifies it: He does not mean that the truth, the essence, is a realm apart to which philosophy has some direct access. He objects, for example, to the common-sense opposition of the "inner man" to his external deeds.

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[1] Quoted by Henrich, op. cit., p. 210n, from an unpublished manuscript (Hothos Nachschrift zum Logikkolleg, 1823, aus der Westdeutschen Bibliothek in Marburg, Q 1299, p. 33a). The same point is made elsewhere (e.g. Enzyklopädie, § 41 Zusatz), but seldom so clearly.

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[1] Enzyklopädie, § 23. See Phänomenologie des Geistes, pp. 58-59 (Baillie Tr., p. 130).

> . . . the only means by which the Essence and the inner self can be verified, is their appearance in outward reality; whereas the appeal which men make to the essential life, as distinct from the material facts of conduct, is generally prompted by a desire to assert their own subjectivity and to elude an absolute and objective judgment.[1]

The Understanding has its moment after all. That which is externally, positively given - things and events - is the source of philosophy.

This reliance on immediate facts is expressed above all in the orientation of Hegel's thought to historical events. The interpretation of the historical emergence of man's spiritual life is the chief task of philosophy, for the Absolute is known only in this historical emergence. So the System itself deals with historical facts to an extent that is shocking to philosophers who like to take their ontology straight. People who begin with the assumption that Hegel claims to be spinning out a purely a priori construction are likely to point to the patent historicity of the moments in the Philosophy of Geist as an almost laughable incongruity. But the a priorism of Hegel's philosophy is a result; it is the task of philosophy to show that all phases of reality are embraced in necessary moments in a self-reflexive System. The System with its necessary moments is not presupposed. It is discovered, in the facts externally given to us.

Perhaps the point can be illustrated by a contrast: Kant's categories of the Understanding are a priori because as a total structure they are the immediate possession of every man; they constitute the basic mental equipment which each man contributes to his experience. It is not so with Hegel's Reason or with the momenta that belong to it. There is a sense, which we shall explore in due course, in which Reason is implicit in every man. But in its fulfilled form as a total self-related structure, Reason does not belong inherently, immediately, to anyone. Reason is an achievement, to be won. One does not begin with Reason, or with the System which is its explication. Hegel presupposes, no doubt, that reality is rational. But at least in principle he does not presuppose the nature of this rationality. We must discover the Reason which is in the facts. Reason becomes our own only insofar as we first give ourselves to that which is emphatically not our own.

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[1] Enzyklopädie, § 112 Zusatz, following Wallace's translation.

That is why, in the Philosophy of Geist, Hegel talks about actual historical developments in art, politics, religion, philosophy. For "the Essence" has appeared "in outward reality" precisely in these developments, and they constitute our only access to the Reason which rules the world. Philosophy cannot treat unrealized essences, things which merely ought to be - hence the critique of Kant's moral reconstitution of philosophy. The "ought" is that which is not, and therefore it cannot be the reality which it is philosophy's business to discover. Of course this reality is super-historical, super-empirical. But philosophy discovers only that truth which has the power "to force itself into existence".

> Philosophy treats nothing, in general, which is not; only what is (what really is, not merely the appearing, the existing) is rational.[1]

The parenthesis will remind us that Hegel is never merely reporting, despite the factual form which his exposition often takes. He is expounding the essential unfolding of Geist within the movementw of history. But it is the unfolding within history, and not simply behind history! If Geist were only behind history, it would be outside all knowledge. The task is to discover its essential movements, to extract "what really is" from the appearances.

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[1] Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion, I, p. 73. There is a translation of this work: Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, trans. by E. G. Speirs & J. B. Sanderson, in three volumes (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. Ltd, 1895). I have not cited the translation, first because I have not had access to it while I was writing, second because it is based on an unusually corrupt German edition, from the Werke of 1840.

Therefore in the Philosophy of History, says Hegel, "we have to take history as it is; we have to proceed historically, empirically."[1] He sharply criticizes the introduction of "a priori fabrications" into history, he denounces in particular "the usual and mediocre writer of history" for the fact that he "is not passive with his thought; he brings his categories with him and sees the presented data through them."[2] No "subjective" preconception can grasp the order in history. True rationality is objective, discovered in the historical events themselves. Hegel has a keen sense for history's (ultimately only apparent) contingency, the uniqueness of its events. The philosopher who gives himself to the facts can discover their inner rationale, but even he cannot predict the future. The Geist moving in history is living and free, moves according to its own rationality. The rationale the philosopher finds cannot be transferred, as a pattern, from one epoch to another. For example, one cannot learn lessons from history that will be of any help in a new

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1. Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte, herausgegeben von Johannes Hoffmeister; Sämtliche Werke, neue kritische Ausgabe, Bd. XVIII A (Hamburg, Felix Meiner Verlag, fünfte, abermals verbesserte Auflage, 1955), I. Teilband - Einleitung: die Vernunft in der Geschichte, p. 30. We encounter the unfortunate complication that only this first volume of the four-volume text has appeared in the new improved edition. For the other three volumes I am obliged to cite older version of the neue kritische Ausgabe, edited by Georg Lasson (Leipzig: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1919). To add to the confusion I shall cite, where possible, the English translation which is based on the old "uncritical" edition edited by Hegel's son Karl: The Philosophy of History, with prefaces by Charles Hegel and the Translator, J. Sibree, and a new Introduction by Prof. C. J. Friedrich (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1956), hereafter cited as "Sibree Tr.". The new editions are much altered, however, and many of the passages cited appear in quite a different context or not at all in the translation. For this citation see Sibree Tr. p. 10.

1. Ibid., I, p. 31 (Sibree Tr. pp. 10-11).

situation.

> Each time, each people, has such unique circumstances, is such an individual situation, that its decisions must be made, and can alone be made, on its own terms. . . . In the pressure of world events a general principle is no help, a recollection of similar relationships (in the past) cannot suffice; for such a thing as a pale memory has no weight in the storm of the present, no power against the life and freedom of the present.[1]

The Reason which informs the movements of Geist in history can be discovered only after Geist has actually proceeded through an epoch.

Yet the philosopher does not, after all, come quite empty-handed to the facts of history. He does bring to it "the simple thought of Reason, that Reason rules the world. . ." The contingent, the accidental in history is after all only an appearance, however much the investigator must submit himself to it in the effort to discover what is essential in it. Reason is the "substance" of history, its "infinite power", "material", "form", "content"! Remembering that the Reason intended here is "not the Reason of a special subject, but the divine absolute Reason," the question remains, however, just how Hegel knows all this. He admits that the sovereignty of Reason is "a presupposition in the investigation of history as such," but "in Philosophy itself it is no presupposition" but the proven conclusion of the System. In fact, even in the investigation of history the sovereignty of Reason does not remain a mere presupposition, but emerges as the result of the investigation.[2] In the Philosophy of History as in any other division of philosophy the ultimate task is to make full circle, to grasp as a proven, content-filled conclusion that which was abstractly presupposed at the outset. The task at every step is to grasp the inner necessity in each - apparently contingent - event. For example, Hegel shows how gunpowder and the printing press appear precisely when the progressive development of Geist reaches the point at which they are needed in an essential way.[1] And as we shall see (Chapter V, § ii), Hegel is prepared to show why the point in history at which the Son of God appears is "the fullness of time"!

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[1] Ibid., I, p. 19 (Sibree Tr. p. 6).

[2] Ibid., I, pp. 28-30 (Sibree Tr. pp. 9-11).

This treatment of historical event illustrates Hegel's way of dealing with "the facts" in general. He admits the truth of the old maxim that "nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu". But as Kant had also seen, if we remain strictly and for every purpose with what is given _in sensu_, we arbitrarily refuse to bring morals and religion into consideration at all. In fact even for Kant genuine scientific knowledge requires more than what is given _in sensu_ alone, as we have seen; Kant would have accepted the famous amendment of Leibniz - "nisi ipse intellectus". But Hegel goes still further, to assert that the opposite of the old maxim is true in a deeper sense than the maxim itself: "Nihil est in sensu quod non fuerit in intellectu." Men cannot bypass the senses in the pursuit of knowledge; but knowledge of things in their necessary connections with one another - _i.e._ Systematic Science - is possible only in virtue of the objective rationality of reality. While, therefore, philosophy makes use of empirical material, and utilizes as well "the universal element" in the several sciences, it must do so in terms of its own categories, which have been extracted from the facts. That is to say: wherever the data may come from in fact, in the order of knowing, in the order of discovery, they must be grasped _logically_ as posited by Reason itself, they must with logical priority be _in intellectu_.[2]

Therefore, as in the kantian philosophy, there is a distinction between the truth in itself and its appearance, between noumena and experienced phenomena. But the truth does not consist in "things-in-themselves" alienated from the knowing subject. The truth is not a "thing" at all, but the Notion of the thing, i.e. a thought belonging to objective Reason, and therefore inherently accessable to a thinking subject, belonging to the thinking subject which can attain the standpoint of Reason. There is no externality in Hegel's noumena. The noumena are in fact, as Hegel often says, what we know best of all, because they are the only "objects" which are thoroughly and absolutely transparent to thought. Thought is not obstructed by the opacity of a "thing" external to it. On the contrary, the Notions which are thought's proper objects actually exercise a normative authority over against the things; the Notion of the thing is its truth even in spite of the thing! The health of a body, for example, remains its Notion, its truth, even if the body is in fact sick. It becomes in existence what it truly is in its Notion when it returns to health; otherwise it perishes - the Notion does not allow its authority to be flouted! The forms of the Notion thus constitute "the vital Geist of the actual, and only that is true of the actual which is true in virtue of these forms, through them and in them."[1] The rational Notion is in fact the objective Ground and Source of the sensible particulars. It emerges explicitly for our thought "out of their dialectic and negativity", to be sure, but it can so emerge because it is their logical ground, which is not nullified by the estranged form of their appearance.[2] The Notion in itself, and not the things-in-themselves, is the truth of reality. Hegel can therefore pronounce a hearty "Amen" to Kant's famous remark that we do not go to the empirical reality like a pupil to a schoolmaster, but like a judge who chooses his own questions and demands that they be answered. But the "judge" is Reason, and not the Understanding.

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[1] _Ibid._, IV, p. 855 (Sibree Tr. pp. 402, 410). See Note 1, _supra_ p. 56, on the documentation of volumes II, III, and IV.

[2] _Enzyklopädie_ §§ 8-9, 12.

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[1] Enzyklopädie, §§ 162, 172, 193.

[2] Wissenschaft der Logik, II, pp. 225-232.

iii. The Implicit Notion as Norm and Telos

Let us take advantage of the calm which comes with beginning a new section to notice that a basic connection mentioned in the speculative storm with which the previous section ended demands closer examination. How does Hegel propose that the Notion, which is a thought, can exercise such power over empirical objects?

We may begin with a consideration in which has been contained much of the hope, and much of the pathos, of the world: nothing in our experience abides. Anyone who tries to grasp the content of his experience in a concrete way - rather than abstracting certain elements for special purposes - must be impressed with the becomingness of things, their coming to be and passing away. Even if a philosopher is disposed to deny the ultimate reality of change, this evident coming to be and passing away of empirical objects constitutes a chief fact to be explained.

It is well-known that Hegel's thought was especially shaped, in its categoreal features, by his devoted study of the classical Greek philosophers and his preoccupation with their problems - especially the problem of becomingness. Aristotle in particular, whom Hegel saw as the culmination of classical Greek thinking, taught Hegel more than any other philosopher up to and perhaps even including his immediate predecessors.[1]

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[1] This influence has bulked especially large in current literature on Hegel, in English as well as in German. Stace opens his work with a discussion of the influence of the Greeks on Hegel (see _op. cit._, pp. 18-30 for his discussion of Aristotle and Hegel). G. R. G. Mure devotes about a third of his excellent _Introduction to Hegel_ (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1940) to an interpretation of Aristotle; the insightfulness of this book is convincing testimony to the usefulness of this approach. Perhaps the most interesting discussion of the relationship between the two philosophers - to mention only one of many brief monographs on the subject - is found in Nicolai Hartmann's _Aristoteles und Hegel_ (Erfurt, Verlag Kurt Stenger, 1933). See also J. Glenn Gray, _Hegel's Hellenic Ideal_ (Morningside Heights, New York: King's Crown Press, 1941). Hegel really founded the modern study of Greek philosophy. The Greeks receive extended treatment in his lectures on the History of Philosophy - which still provides one of the most exciting introductions to them in print, as well as perhaps the most useful introduction to Hegel's own philosophy.

It was Hegel's conviction, as it was Aristotle's, that a thing could not become at all if it had absolutely no previous status in being. "Ex nihilo nihil fit." But Hegel rejects a simple-minded interpretation of this formula: if something can become only if it is already actual, then, says Hegel, we have pantheism.[1] In fact there would be no genuine becoming at all. So if one is to account for change and movement, then one must acknowledge an ontological status which is neither absolute non-being nor yet being, but is the mediating principle between them, the ground of the passage from the not yet existent to fully actualized existence. This mediating principle, Aristotle's _dynameis_ (potentiality), is what Hegel means by the Notion of a thing, its truth as "implicit" (_an_ _sich_).

Such a principle is of course contradictory. But Hegel's point is that things really do contradict themselves, because they are in a process of change, not simply self-identical. Therefore, traditional logic (the logic of non-contradiction, which rules the Understanding) cannot deal with things in their concreteness, whatever its usefulness may be for certain abstract pursuits. For by becoming what it was not, a thing violates the basic law of the logic of non-contradiction. One of Kant's great achievements was to show the impasse into which this logic falls when it attempts to proceed from its abstract, one-sided view of things to questions of ultimate reality. The Understanding, whose "canon" this logic is, is constrained to maintain opposite propositions (antinomies) concerning the soul, the cosmos, and God. It cannot resolve this opposition, because it knows no internal, necessary relations between opposing concepts; it is itself a structure of opposed logical forms, such that if one thing is then its opposite cannot be. So when it finds itself asserting contradictory conclusions concerning ultimate metaphysical realities, it can only shrug its shoulders and let the stalemate stand. In fact, says Hegel, the quandary does not appear merely in the case of these ultimate realities; the Understanding cannot deal with any concrete, real thing at all. So there are many more than Kant's four antinomies; Kant had only opened the subject. The antinomies "appear in all objects of every kind, in all Representations, Notions, and Ideas." The fact that the Understanding cannot resolve these antinomies, which led Kant to conclude that noumenal reality is unknowable, really only demonstrates the bankruptcy of the Understanding and its logic of non-contradiction. A contradiction defines the outer limit of the Understanding's ability to deal with an object; but he who goes to the objective realities in order to discover the Reason which is in them, rather than seeking to impose an abstract logical schema on them, will find in the antinomies the clue to reality and to the Reason-in-reality. The antinomies will simply cause him to press on to a metaphysical logic attuned to "the true and positive meaning of the antinomies . . . that every actual thing involves a coexistence of opposed elements."[1] The existence of a thing is not negated simply by other things; if it did not contain its negation within itself, were not in its very nature a finite object, a becoming thing, it would not be negated at all. Metaphysical logic must grasp the opposition within things, the inner necessity by which things change into their opposites because they include their opposites within themselves (e.g. death in life). Self-contradiction, self-negation, is the life of all things.[2]

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[1] _Enzyklopädie_, § 88.

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[1] Ibid., § 48 with Zusatz. See §§ 25, 214, 231. It should be noted, however, that the Understanding is a necessary moment in Reason itself. Without the precise differentiations and definitions attained by the exercise of its "abstract universals" everything would be left in fuzzy confusion. Thus "the merit and rights of the mere Understanding . . . [consist] in the fact that apart from Understanding there is no fixity or accuracy in the region either of theory or of practice." Ibid., § 80 Zusatz. The philosopher cannot dispense with the precision gained by abstraction. Yet the task remains of reconciling the abstract oppositions, and this the Understanding can't do.

[2] Ibid., §§ 81-82, 119.

We may express this internal self-negation in another way by saying that the telos of a thing in its process of becoming is implicated in it throughout. The telos is, in fact, the Notion of the thing, what the thing is potentially or implicitly (an sich). Hegel does not have in mind the sort of teleology which finds the purpose of a thing in its service of an object extraneous to itself. He means "inner design", and praises Kant for having brought this classical concept again to prominence. The telos represents the authentic striving of an entity for its own true mode of existence, a striving within its present existence toward that which contradicts its present existence. Hegel mentions appetite as a simple example of this striving. In realizing its end, the object overcomes its estranged form of existence, its unrealized factuality, and becomes identical with its notion. This is to say that the definition of a thing is not contained in abstract qualities or predicates which express its immediate state of existence, but in its telos. When the object overcomes its own merely given state of existence in a teleological movement, it does not lose its essential being, but rather gains it. For the Notion is its true being all the while, even when "subjectively", immediately, its Notion is self-estranged.[1] Here again Hegel considers that he has gone beyond Kant and Fichte: the good of a thing is not "fixed as a mere 'ought', or goal of perfection," but is the potent inner being of the thing, and is its good only insofar as it is actively producing itself.[2]

Of course, a thing may not in fact achieve its end. That does not mean that the telos is no longer its truth, its Notion, but that the thing remains estranged from its Notion. If the acorn does not become an oak it has not fulfilled its potentiality, and has lost all its significance, its rationale. Of course it is still in existence for a while. But at least so far as its own "inner design" is concerned, it no longer figures in the developing movement of things which is authentic reality. In other words, it is irrational, no longer a medium for its Notion. This consideration may help to illuminate the embattled passage in the Foreward to Hegel's Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts[1] in which Hegel roundly declared that the Actual is the Rational, and the Rational is Actual. He remarks, a little ingenuously, in the Introduction to the Enzyklopädie that "these simple propositions" have excited shock and hostility, even in quarters which would not wish to be denied philosophical and religious concern. Some of these folk, after all, believe that God is the supreme Actuality, i.e. "that He alone is truly actual." So it ought to be evident that the actuality of existing things is problemmatic. As a matter of fact, "existence is in part appearance, and only in part actuality."[2] To speak more precisely, Actuality is the more concrete category than Existence, is more adequate to the Idea. Thus Existence is only "implicitly what Actuality is, real reflection" (of the Notion).[3] Actuality is the truth of existence, which existence must become. It can do this only insofar as it realizes correspondence with its Notion. What Hegel means is that true Actuality partakes of necessity; by being adequate to its Notion, a thing is taken up into Reason's own inner movements. When existence is no longer in process of realizing its Notion it is not necessary but fortuitous, a mere abstract possibility which has accidentally (merely naturalistically) happened to appear on the scene. It is mere caprice, analogous to the mind's idle fancies. There is an aspect of this fortuitousness in all existing things, so long as their respective Notions are not yet realized. Anything, after all, is "possible" - just as, on Hegel's terms, everything is a union of opposites and so "impossible". Anything may, or may not, happen to exist. But the Actual is rational by definition. It is a highly selective definition, when viewed from the standpoint of existence. But it is the only adequate definition when viewed from the standpoint of Geist, and the System proves that that is the true standpoint, the truth of every standpoint, even the standpoint of existence.[1] Now, metaphysics is concerned with the Actual, with the truth of things. But the truth of a thing is its Notion, and to deal with Notions, in their necessary relation to one another, is the task of Logic.

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[1] Enzyklopädie, § 204.

[2] Ibid., § 234. Hegel considers this teleological movement within things to be the immanent agency for the working of divine Providence. I shall discuss this complex theme in the next chapter.

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[1] Herausgegeben von Johannes Hoffmeister, Sämtliche Werke, neue kritische Ausgabe, Bd. XII (Hamburg; Verlag von Felix Meiner, 1955), p. 14.

[2] Enzyklopädie, § 6.

[3] Wissenschaft der Logik, II, p. 169.

> Logic therefore coincides with metaphysics, the Systematic Science of things grasped in thoughts, which are regarded as expressing the essentiality of things.[2]

Reason, that is, is the sovereign and soul of the world.

This outlook, in which Reason exercises a critical, normative fuhction in relation to "the facts", was in large measure the controlling factor in Hegel's socio-ethical thinking. Reason is the ruler, it is not imprisoned in the facts of any given status quo. Herbert Marcuse makes a great deal of the liberating character of this scheme in his Reason and Revolution: Man does not simply accommodate his thoughts to the existing order and values, but recognizes thought as the measuring rod of the adequacy of the existing order. He demands that existence must be rational. Hegel thus, according to Marcuse, joins the main stream of

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[1] Enzyklopädie, §§ 142-149; Wissenschaft der Logik, II, pp. 169-184. This necessity is, on Hegel's terms, the requisite for Freedom. Geist is fully free when existence has assumed the form of Geist's own necessary movements. Accordingly, in the Logic, Freedom is said to be the truth of necessity. Enzyklopädie, § 158.

[2] Enzyklopädie, § 24.

German idealism in combatting the skeptical-conformist results of empiricism. It is Socrates against the Sophists all over again, Hegel defending the supreme right of Reason to rule, against not only skeptical and conformist acquiescence but against the reactionary grandeur of the maxim of what Basil Willey calls "Cosmic Toryism": "Whatever is, is right". Hegel sees that the evil, the unjust, the irrational, are not to be accepted as the real, however embedded in existence they may be.[1] Marcuse has to admit, however, that in his later years Hegel used his doctrine of Reason to veer dangerously toward a Cosmic Toryism raised to the second power, by making universal Reason triumph in history by its own historical necessity, thus suppressing the "critical" direction which Marcuse sees as the real strength of Hegel's philosophy.[2] But on Hegel's terms Reason can be the authoritative "critic" of the existing situation only because it is already the implicit truth of the situation - otherwise we have a mere "ought". And it is the authority of Reason as so understood that grounds the necessity of its realization. There is a question whether the "harmonistic interpretation of history" which Marcuse deplores does not follow from the view of Reason which he approves.

However that may be, we do have here an important defense of Reason as a lever for social progress. For example, freedom and equality are defended as rights in the state - though not on the basis of a mythical "state of nature" (which Hume had exploded). Indeed, it is the immediate "state of nature" which must be overcome by Geist. But the System, by showing that freedom and equality belong intrinsically to Geist in its process of self-realization - not indeed as abstract qualities but as the basis of its universality, its character as Geist - has established the authenticity of this claim. When the existing situation does not correspond to these forms it is at war with its own truth, since it nevertheless contains them as its own principle; and this truth will ultimately prevail.[1]

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[1] Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory (New York: The Humanities Press, 2nd Edition with a Supplementary Chapter, 1954), pp. 5-8, 18-28, 45-46 *et passim*. While a dogmatic empiricism must be questioned about its basis for social change, however, in point of fact not all empiricists have been conformists. For example, although Locke treats universals as "inventions and creatures of the understanding" and mere human "signs" so far as knowledge is concerned, when he turns to the moral sphere he is able to speak of natural laws of justice *etc.* inscribed on the human intellect with the same clarity of thought as a law of logic and mathematics. It may indeed be a dubious procedure for an empiricist to unfurl the banner of universal reason at this point. Some empiricists, however - e.g. Hume - raised the salutary question whether human reason has to establish its "right" to govern the social order by the claim that it is already implicit in the nature of things. This question is connected with issues we shall want to raise later.

[2] *Ibid.*, *e.g.* p. 246.

For Geist is to become in existence what it already is implicitly: the reality of the cosmos. It is important to notice that the medium for this accomplishment is knowledge, or consciousness. Actuality must become conscious of itself as Geist, i.e. Geist must achieve a reflected consciousness of itself in the world. Specifically, this self-reflected consciousness is to be achieved in history, in man's intellectual and spiritual development. In its fulfillment, the task of World History, the task of God, of the individual man, of philosophy, all collapse into this single task of Geist; for all of these, however diverse they may appear to be, are at base and in truth rational Geist. Precisely the recognition of this truth in man's consciousness, is the goal.

> But Geist is free in the consciousness of Geist; its temporal, limited existence is thereby aufgehoben and relates itself to pure Essence, which is at the same time its Essence. . . . Geist is at first an object. . . . But the goal is that. . . it become known as it is in and for itself, that it bring itself in its truth to appearance for itself, - that it bring forth a spiritual [geistige] world which is adequate to its own Notion, fulfill, realize its truth. . . - Idea is reality, which is only the mirror, the expression of the Notion, - this embraces the universal goal of Geist and of History; and as the seed bears in itself the whole nature of the tree, the taste and form of its fruit, so also do the first steps of Geist already contain virtualiter the whole History.[2]

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[1] Enzyklopädie, § 539.

[2] Philosophie der Weltgeschichte, I, p. 61 (Sibree Tr. pp. 17-18).

For History is Geist's progressive self-realization in the world, the progressive development in the world of consciousness, culminating in man's consciousness of Geist as his own self-consciousness. The development as well as the culmination is already defined in Geist's Notion. This process also brings about the realization of true Freedom, which is precisely this self-reflexive existence - "Beisichselbstsein" - in which one wills and knows all truth in knowing and willing one's own true self - as Geist![1] In Geist's closure with itself the distinction between finite existence and the Notion's abstract infinity is also aufgehoben into the "true infinite"[2] of self-reflection, Geist realizing the identity with itself in its other. All terms collapse into one another when Hegel speaks of the reconciliation, the end of History, the self-realization of Geist, Freedom, absolute Knowledge etc. etc. Its realization requires an historical process, which is however already contained implicitly, potentially, "virtualiter", in the beginning. We shall look more closely at the nature of this process in the chapters to follow. The most important thing about it, though, is that it is ruled by Reason.

Let us round off this chapter by returning briefly to the nature of philosophy as a System, with the above considerations in mind. Now it is more evident how the System can be a circle constructed in such a way that every "foreward" movement is also a movement backward into the ultimate ground. Since the System as a whole contains the truth of the cosmos as a whole, the "movement" of the System, in which the various Notions which constitute the truth of existing things are brought into an internally related unity with one another, is necessarily analogous to cosmic teleology. What binds the cosmos into a unity is precisely the internal relationship of its Notions, which is exhibited in the System. Geist's knowledge of itself as Geist is not only the telos of cosmic process, of history, but is also in a special sense the telos of the internal movement within the System - not in this case the goal of a temporal process of course, but the goal, the conclusion, of a logical movement. However, it is the conclusion which is implicitly implicated, presupposed, in every moment in the System. Thus every moment is a "metaphysical definition" of the Absolute, each a more adequate definition than the previous moment was. That is, the internal development of the System is the progressive explication of that which was implicit from the beginning.

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[1] Ibid., I, p. 55 (Sibree Tr. p. 17). See I, pp. 54-64, 149-157, 167ff (Sibree Tr. pp. 17-20, 55-57, 63ff); Enzyklopädie, §§ 553-554.

[2] As particularly opposed to the "bad infinite", which is endlessness. Endlessness stands over against the boundaried character of the finite, but does so as the other of the finite, that which the finite is not, which is to say that this so-called "infinite" is limited by the finite, and is thus itself really finite. The true infinite is thought reflected into itself; when the object attains its Notion, its otherness is ovefcome, so that thought in dealing with it deals with itself; no limiting externality is left. Wissenschaft der Logik, I, pp. 125ff; Enzyklopädie, §§ 94-95.

Hence it comes about, as critics have observed, that the moment of immediacy which begins each triad is not simply immediate; the beginnings are never quite innocent. The Absolute is the Notion of all the Notions. "Being", as its first metaphysical definition, "is the Notion implicit only."[1] Explicitly, as such, however, Being is the utterly abstract and immediate, without content or differential character; i.e. as we discover at the beginning of the Logic, it is the same as Nothing. But if this Being which is so empty of content as to be the same as Nothing had only this utterly immediate character, it would already be all over for the System. It is Nothing, Nothing is. This Being and Nothing are to be regarded in the light of the fact that they are the first categoreal conditions of the concrete, i.e. in the first instance, of Becomingness, and finally of the Idea. That which is explicit in this beginning, its immediate emptiness, constitutes its estrangement, its inadequacy as a definition of the Absolute. But the true content of the System is identical with its Method. And since the Method

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[1] Enzyklopädie, §§ 84-85.

> is the objective, immanent form, therefore the immediacy of the beginning must be in itself the deficiency, and must be endowed with the drive to lead itself further.[1]

Again, we have noticed that there is no beginning in the System, which is to say that we begin with Nothing at all.

> However, it is a Nothing, and it is to become Something. The beginning is not pure Nothing, but a Nothing from which Something is to proceed; Being is therefore also contained already in the beginning. The beginning contains therefore both, Being and Nothing; it is the unity of Being and Nothing; - or is Non-Being which is at the same time Being, and Being which is at the same time Non-Being.[2]

So "Something" is already built into this empty "beginning" - Indeed, everything is built into it, but implicitly. We could begin, and in a way do begin, with "the Absolute or Eternal or God", and Hegel remarks parenthetically that God would have "the most incontestable right" to be considered the true beginning of the System. But before the articulation embraced in the progressive movement of the Idea, "God" or "the Absolute" would be without any determinate meaning. So we begin with Being, which is precisely the Absolute - but as yet only implicitly, indeterminately.[3] The course of the System records the successively more adequate and explicit definitions of the Absolute.

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[1] *Wissenschaft der Logik*, II, p. 489.

[2] *Ibid.*, I, p. 58; see pp. 66ff, and *Enzyklopädie*, §§ 86ff.

[3] *Wissenschaft der Logik*, I, p. 63. There is an excellent chapter on Hegel's doctrine of "Der Anfang der Wissenschaft" in Wolfgang Albrecht, *Hegels Gottesbeweis: Eine Studie zur "Wissenschaft der Logik* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1958), pp. 51-67.

III. THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF HEGEL'S DIALECTIC: THE DIVINE GROUND OF RECONCILIATION

The matters discussed in the preceding chapter are important in our effort to understand Hegel theologically, because he frequently attests that this whole view of the nature of Philosophy in its relation to the facts of existence is theologically based. The Reason that is in things is the divine Reason, the progressive manifestation of rational Freedom in the world is the revelatory, reconciliatory activity of God. Hegel wishes to elaborate the claim that the course of events is ruled by God, and not by chance or by blind necessity. Thus, as he frequently says, his Philosophy of History is a theodicy. The sovereignty of Reason in Nature and History is always connected in Hegel's lectures and writings with the Christian doctrine of Providence.[1] Hegel means to take the doctrine of Providence out of the realm of piously vague thoughts, that after all everything is in God's hands, into the realm of demonstration in the details of history that it is indeed so.

The teleological process in things is a theodicy. And the "logical teleology" Hegel finds in the Notions as necessary moments in the System is also given specific theological reference: As he shows in his brilliant _Vorlesungen Über die Beweise vom Dasein Gottes_, the System as a whole describes a comprehensive proof for the existence of God. We begin with any moment in the System, and are constrained by a necessary, internal movement to ascend through successively richer categories until we arive at the Absolute, which is thus seen to be the truth of all truths. Thus not only does the System embrace all the traditional proofs for the existence of God, in a purified form - since all the traditional starting-points find a place in the System somewhere - but in fact there are as many proofs as there are moments in the System. Or one can just as properly say that there is only one proof: the System itself.[1]

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[1] _E.g._, _Philosophie der Weltgeschichte_, I, pp. 38-49; IV, p. 938 (Sibree Tr. pp. 12-16, 457); _Enzyklopädie_ § 147 Zusatz; _Philosophie der Religion_, I, pp. 44, 76, 144, 273f, et passim.

Nor was Hegel simply spinning out another of the private theologies which have emerged from time to time from philosophers' writing desks in sovereign unconcern for any religious tradition. But in fact Hegel considered himself to be a specifically Christian philosopher, and his private correspondence as well as his public utterances during his mature period testify to the seriousness with which he accepted this role as a Christian vocation. This is what gives his thought special interest for our purposes, and justifies us in bringing Christian theological criteria to bear in weighing it. Of course, a Christian can learn from anybody. He is free to relate himself sympathetically and critically to work that is avowedly unchristian or even anti-christian; but in such a case it is the most futile question-begging to point out that the thinker has failed to acknowledge some distinctively Christian "truth". But Hegel claims that his philosophy coincides ultimately with Christian theology,indeed that it is a form of Christian confession. Still, it is a philosophy, an attempt to grasp first principles with metaphysical rigor. It is not enough to measure his thought by proof-texts from scripture or creeds. But for Hegel the God whose Reason is sovereign in history, the God whose existence is proven as the necessary conclusion of the System, is none other than the Holy Trinity of Christian faith. The theologian must be willing to think philosophically with Hegel, but he cannot evade the question whether Hegel has a right to make such an identification as this.

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[1] *Vorlesungen über die Beweise vom Dasein Gottes: Vorlesungen uber die Philosophie der Religion*, III Teil, 2 Hälfte, pp. 66-74 et passim. See also Enzyklopädie §§ 50-51, 205; and *Philosophie der Religion*, I, pp. 207-225. Hegel calls attention in particular to the close relationship between these lectures and the Logic. He remarks at the outset of the lectures that they are to "constitute a kind of supplement" to the Logic, "not in content, but in form, since they are only a special shaping of the basic principles of the Logic". (p. 1) Though the lectures do not add anything to the content of the Logic, the Logic is woven "in the center of the content" of the lectures. (p. 2).

The use of the System as a proof for the existence of God is helpfully discussed in two recent books already cited: Albrecht's *Hegels Gottesbeweis*, and Henrich's *Der Ontologische Gottesbeweis*, pp. 194ff. Albrecht's book in particular relates the proof to the Logic, and both provide bibliographies on the subject.

i. God "in Himself": The Holy Trinity

God in Himself, in His eternal Idea, in His Notion, is the Holy Trinity. For Hegel this means that God is not a simple "motionless" identity with Himself, His self-identity is not unchanging, simple oneness. God is in a relationship with Himself, reflected into Himself in a self-relation of knowledge and love. There is a distinction within His own nature, such that He confronts another in Himself. This is an eternal distinction which has, in itself, nothing to do with the creation of the world. But this distinction is also eternally aufgehoben, preserved yet overcome in its otherness, such that in knowing and loving this other in Himself (the Son), He loves only Himself. Again, God in His universality (the Father) eternally projects Himself into a particular (the Son) in whom He is fully reflected; and eternally returns to Himself (as Spirit) without losing the self-differentiation implied in the self-projection into the Son. Thus God is self-identical only in His self-differentiation, is eternally the same only in being eternally the universality which is outside itself in particularity and returning into itself. This self-differentiation and return is a "process" only in a logical, not a temporal, sense. Precisely this constitutes the eternity of the divine life - a true infinity of self-reflection. Precisely this movement makes it possible to speak of a divine life. And because God is eternally characterized by this movement He is Geist, Person, Love -

in Himself, quite independent of the world.[1] Hegel's treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity has been influential in Protestant theology, and holds a decisive place in his own System.

In fact, the least upsetting of its delicate balance is enough to sabotage the whole System. For the Notion of anything is also its telos, and God - Geist - is the inner truth of the world, God in Himself is the Notion of all reality. The final reconciliation of the world with God, i.e. its realization of itself as Geist, is possible only in virtue of the fact that this telos is already implicit as the divine Notion. So the purposive course of the world-process depends upon what God is in Himself. If the world, as the other of Geist, is to be reconciled with Geist, then there must be an eternal objectification into otherness and eternal overcoming of this otherness in reconciliation within the divine Notion itself. If this subtle identity-in-difference is not maintained in the understanding of the divine Notion, then Hegel's dialectic of cosmic estrangement and reconciliation becomes unintelligible.

Suppose, for example, that the eternal distinction of the three Persons is not preserved. We may illustrate this mistake by quoting McTaggart's summary statement of the relationship:

> According to Hegel's position the Father and the Son are the Thesis and Antithesis of a triad of which the Holy Ghost is the Synthesis. It will follow from this that the Holy Ghost is the sole reality of the Trinity.[2]

In the first place, the treatment of Hegel's dialectic as a stereotyped thesis-antithesis-synthesis scheme of such sort that this conclusion follows simply from the triadic form, is already a gross oversimplification. The nature of the dialectic is always determined by the content with which it is dealing.[1] In particular, the "dialectic" within the Trinity is in many ways quite unique. Furthermore, if the Spirit really eclipsed the Father and the Son in the way that McTaggart suggests, it would cease to be Spirit (Geist). It is true that Hegel applies the name "Geist" to the whole Godhead, but this is precisely to indicate that the Godhead is characterized by internal movement, self-reflection, relationality. If the Godhead did not contain this relationality eternally and indissolubly, then the divine Notion could not be the ground of a dialectical movement within the world, world-process would not be a self-reflection of the divine life, indeed there could be no relationality between God and the world. For God can only become or "perform" in the world what He eternally is in Himself: He must be living, relational within Himself in order to enter any relation at all. This is the sense in which Hegel preserves the tradition of the divine immutability, that God's "activity" in the world must be in accord with His own nature. The nature of the cosmic dialectic must follow directly the relationality within the three distinct moments of the divine life. At all costs, the latter must be preserved.

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[1] Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion, III Teil, 2 Hälfte (Die absolute Religion), pp. 53-84. See also Phänomenologie des Geistes, pp. 584ff (Baillie Tr. pp. 766ff). These are the basic texts on which this whole section is based.

[2] John McTaggart E. McTaggart, Studies in Hegelian Cosmology (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1918), p. 204.

But it is equally essential to maintain the unity of these three moments, as likewise an eternal unity. This means not only that the three Persons are not separate, not three gods, but also that the Trinity itself does not develop in the cosmic process. It must already be complete, eternally, or there could be no cosmic process. Therefore I must hold Richard Kroner guilty of a serious slip in his otherwise quite masterful summary of Hegel's philosophical development in his Introduction to the Early Theological Writings: Speaking of Hegel's mature System, Kroner says that God in His Notion - "in the beginning" - is not the Holy Trinity, but only the Logos.

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[1] Not all Hegel's dialectical movements are even in the form of triads. Even when they are, Hegel makes clear distinctions in the kinds of relationships involved; e.g. there are quite different dialectical relationships within each of the three main parts of the Logic - see Enzyklopädie, §§ 112, 161-162.

> God in the beginning is Logos; at the end he is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is Logos in so far as he exists before the creation of nature and man; He is the Holy Trinity after he has passed through nature and man and reveals himself to man.[1]

As we would expect from so acute an interpreter as Kroner, there is an important truth in this statement of the matter, which we have to explore in the next section. But the problem is mis-stated if it is not clearly understood that what Kroner calls the Logos is certainly the divine Notion as Holy Trinity. Hegel does not speak of Logos in this connection. The term does suggest in a loose way something of the relation of God's eternal Idea to the world, but everything depends on the self-relation being contained within that eternal Idea. It is a little misleading that the main divisions in Hegel's treatment of "the Absolute Religion" have customarily been entitled "Kingdom of the Father", "Kingdom of the Son", "Kingdom of the Spirit". These titles are not found in Hegel's own manuscript or in any of the handwritten sources.[2] They are not absolutely wrong, but they have some validity as titles for the moments embraced in the Absolute Religion - God in Himself, creation and estrangement, reconciliation in the congregation - only because the process of alienation and reconciliation described there is a recapitulation of the inner Notion of God Himself. Accordingly, the discussion of the "whole" Trinity is found in the division usually entitled "Kingdom of the Father". For God in Himself, outside creation, is the Holy Trinity.

Even in that discussion, to be sure, Hegel can discuss the relation of the Trinity to universality/particularity, to space, and to time. The Father is in the form of universality, pure thought, "outside the world, spaceless, outside finitude, God as He is in and for Himself;" and is also outside time, the "eternal Idea". The second Person is the form of the manifestation, the particularization, is "in the element of Representation" (Vorstellung), related as an object, spatial, historical, indeed "the world, the divine History as real." The third is "the form of the return out of the manifestation into itself, the absolute Individuality," absolute subjectivity, the "inner place, the congregation," in the world and yet transfigured, the true present.[1] Now, this appears to be a summary statement of the whole dialectic of alienation and reconciliation, as it appears within the categories of the Absolute Religion. And in a way it is, since the whole historical religious development must recapitulate precisely these forms. But the references to space and time etc. in the discussion of the Trinity itself must not lead us to confuse the dialectic within the Trinity with the cosmic dialectic. Hegel is fairly careful in his language at this point: the second Person of the Trinity has "the form of" manifestation, the third has "the form of" return in these spatio-temporal connections. The actual manifestation and return, in which the spatio-temporal references are no longer forms but actual structures, are to be distinguished from the forms within the divine Notion itself, where these connections are only contained in principle. The complex of Persons express, so to say, God's potentiality for these relations to the world. But if we identify the Trinity with the cosmic process which reiterates its innar life, we understand this reiteration in a "false sense . . . as if the eternal Son of the Father . . . were the same as the physical and spiritual world."[2] This Hegel does not intend. The Trinity as a unity in difference constitutes the Notion which is the logical ground of Geist's movement out of itself and subsequent return in the dialectic of Nature and History.

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[1] Richard Kroner, "Introduction", Hegel's Early Theological Writings, p. 61.

[2] See the notes "Zur Feststellung des Textes" appended to Lasson's edition of the Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion, III-1, pp. 238-239.

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1. Philosophie der Religion, III-1, pp. 65-66.

2. Ibid., III-1, p. 86.

This triune Ground of reconciliation is variously characterized by Hegel as Subject, Geist, Love, Life _etc._ - the same kinds of expressions he had used during his years of discovery, but now understood with categoreal rigor. But such terms are not to be regarded as attributes, predicates of God. They in fact deny that God has attributes in the usual sense.

> We are accustomed to say of God: God is the Creator of the world, He is all-just, all-knowing, all-wise.
>
> But this is not the true apprehension of the truth, of what God is; it is the manner of Representation, of the Understanding. It is also necessary to define the Notion in this way, through predicates; but it is a reflecting, imperfect mode of thought, not thought through the Notion, thought of the Notion of God, the Idea.[1]

The definition of God in predicates introduces distinctions within His being, unresolved oppositions and contradictions. Such definitions cannot grasp the unity of any living entity, much less a living God. This is always the failure of the abstract Understanding: it posits abstract predicates and leaves them in unresolved opposition. Even if we tack the traditional "omni"s onto the predicates, and explain that God is the perfection of all qualities, it is still an empty, patchwork gesture. It raises the predicates to infinity, but it is the bad infinite, only more of the same, _i.e._ at bottom finite, still opposed. But the Trinity is a true infinite, of self-reflection. That was why the Enlightenment philosophers, the philosophers of the Understanding, had generally been befuddled by the doctrine of the Trinity. It appeared to them only a mathematical puzzle: the one was somehow supposed to be three, which is a shockingly naked contradiction. Hegel takes particular satisfaction in defending this doctrine against these "enlightened" men. Of course they cannot "understand" the Trinity! To speak of God as Love, Life, Geist, is precisely to deny that He can be grasped in fixed predicates. There is indeed otherness, opposition in the divine Life, but it is an other

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1. _Ibid._, III-1, p. 13.

which is contained in this Life, is no sooner posited than brought back into unity, no sooner unified than posited in otherness. This is Life.

> The Vitality [Lebendigkeit] of God or of Geist consists in nothing else than to determine itself, to posit itself in finitude, in the distinction, the contradiction - which can also appear as a predicate - but at the same time eternally to overcome this contradiction. That is the Life, the Deed, the Activity of God; He is absolute Activity, Actuosity, and His Activity is eternally to reconcile the contradiction: that is God Himself.[1]

The unity of the divine Life is not a seamless One into which all distinction is swallowed up. The distinction is contained in its return to unity. This is the unity of infinite self-reflection, as Holy Trinity, which can alone provide the adequate definition of God.

In these same terms, God is Love. His Love is to reconcile the estranged. But God loves because He _is_ Love, in the nature of His own inner Life. For in love there is a distinction between two, but this is a distinction which is also aufgehoben, such that each has its authentic self-consciousness only in consciousness of the other. In loving, God again acts only in accord with His own Notion.[2]

Hegel's most characteristic and systematic expression for this triune relationality is to say that God is Geist. Again, the trinitarian structure defines the nature of Geist, which is, as Hegel everywhere says, to be "for Geist".

> The consciousness of God or the self-consciousness of God as the return of consciousness into itself is just that which we hage in general called Geistigkeit.[3]

Geist defines the Godhead as a whole, and each Person. Indeed, we are warned against speaking of whole and part in relation to the standpoint of Geist, warned against any easy schematization of the sort that has produced the misunderstandings we noted above.

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[1] _Ibid._, III-1, p. 13. See also pp. 58f, 69ff.

[2] _Ibid._, III-1, p. 75. See also pp. 56-57 for a passage from Hegel's manuscript which exhibits clearly the close relationship all these terms had in Hegel's thinking.

[3] _Ibid._, III-1, pp. 14-15.

> The abstract God, the Father, is the universal, the eternal, the encompassing, total universality. We are on the level of Geist; the universal here includes everything in itself. The Other, the Son, is the infinite particularity, the manifestation; the third, Geist, is the individuality as such, - but all three are Geist. In the third, we say, God is Geist; but this is also presupposed: the third is the first.[1]

This triune God, Geist through and through, is the Reason which rules the world, whose inner structure is reiterated in the dialectic of the world's History. What is true of the divine Idea is true in a derived sense of the "living" course of History, indeed of all genuine life; "it is present in any purpose and any vitality." And as Geist is definitive of the third Person of the Trinity only because it also defines the first, so it is in all that is living.

> Life is thus the result only insofar as it begets itself, is the product which again produces; this production is the Living itself, i.e. it is its own presupposition. It goes through its process, and out of this there comes forth nothing new: that which is brought forth is already present from the beginning.[2]

So also with History, which, as the sphere of divine sovereignty, is also self-enclosed Life in this sense. For the Trinity as infinitely self-reflected Geist is the ground of the historical dialectic.

In the light of this view of the relation between the triune God and History, a remark like the following, made in the lectures on the Philosophy of History, is not likely to be so puzzling:

> God is thus recognized as Geist only when known as the triune. This new principle is the axis on which World History turns. History therefore proceeds to and from this point.[3]

Such remarks are not merely courteous bows to piety. Hegel knows quite precisely what he means.

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1. Ibid., III-1, p. 72.

2. Loc. cit.

3. Philosophie der Geschichte, III, p. 722 (Sibree Tr. p. 319).

ii. What Is the Ontological Status of Hegel's God?

It is clear how God in Himself as Holy Trinity can be the form - on Kroner's terms, the Logos - of the total dialectic of Geist in the world. God in Himself is in fact the first moment of this dialectic, containing all the rest at least as abstract definition. But this way of stating the matter raises the question whether Kroner is not essentially correct (allowing for the objection I made to his language) in charging that

> . . . there is a momentous difference between Hegel's philosophy and Christian dogma: according to Hegel, God before the Creation is not the heavenly Father of Jesus and of man; he is Logos and nothing but Logos.[1]

It is difficult even to state this question precisely, without unfairly importing categories foreign to Hegel. For example, the usual question would be, "Does God really exist apart from cosmic process?" But Tillich among others, with his own deep roots in German idealism, has alerted us to the possibility that that may not be a good question: Existence may be a limited category, of such sort that to say that God exists is precisely a denial that He is really God. This would certainly be the case for Hegel. Existence, as a moment in the Logic, is one of the definitions of the Absolute; but it is an inadequate definition, inferior to the Idea in which it is aufgehoben. The only adequate definition is the whole System in its total development. But does this mean that God has no independent substantiality peculiarly His own, apart from His involvement in cosmic process, apart from the movement into estrangement and return through the world, which is defined in the System?

Hegel encountered this question in his own day, at least in one form: he frequently had to defend himself against the charge of pantheism. He adroitly deflects the charge in this form, by replying that a real pantheism would hold that things in their immediacy and multiple particularity are gods, or collectively constitute the being of God. Certainly he holds no such doctrine. Nothing that is finite can, as such, be identical with God. In fact, Hegel points out, none of the great monistic thinkers, Ionian or Hindu or modern (like Spinoza), have ever been pantheists in this sense. For example, according to Spinoza only the one divine Substance is actual; the multiplicity of finite objects is an appearance, and not as such actual, divine. Thus, instead of charging Spinoza with atheism or pantheism, his view ought properly to have been called acosmism.[1] Now, does Hegel mean to suggest simply that he is no more of a pantheist than Spinoza was? - or that his own view is also acosmic in this sense? Some of his propositions move clearly in this direction: In the Enzyklopädie he writes that "the meaning of the elevation of Geist" from the finite categories to the infinite

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[1] Kroner, op. cit., p. 60.

> is that the world does indeed belong to being, but this being is only an illusion [Schein], not true being, not absolute truth; that this truth is only beyond that appearance [Erscheinung] in God, God alone is the true being.[2]

It appears, then, that the real issue may be the very reverse of the one which I tried to formulate at the beginning of this section. But in this context the question whether the world has any reality over against God is correlative with the question whether God has any reality over against the world. There is a teleological movement, regarding which one can say that the world is moving toward unity with God, or that God (Geist) is striving toward a perfect reflection of Himself in the world. Both God and the world find their fulfillment in reality in this process and its culmination. But then it appears that it is a matter of indifference whether one calls this process cosmic or divine; and therefore, paradoxically, it might be a matter of indifference whether one calls this view of things acosmic or atheistic. One would be given a clear choice between these two expressions, in this context, only if it were clear that all true being were to be attributed to the world alone (atheism) as it is in its immediacy, or to God alone (acosmism) as He is in Himself. Well, Hegel says that "God alone is the true being." But Hegel does not refer here to "God in Himself" in distinction from the world. Certainly the world can have "true being" only to the extent that it is reconciled to God - to the divine Idea. But Hegel could just as well say that God in Himself, as Idea, has no true being except insofar as His ideal nature is realized in the world. Of course, to speak of "realization" or "reconciliation" at this juncture is only to give a name for our problem, not to solve it. God in Himself and the world in its immediate (alienated) existence are both abstractions from the reality, yet both have a carefully defined role in the achievement of the reality, and it is only by examination of these two components that we can understand the reconciliation. At any rate, having indicated the correlative nature of the problems attaching to the world in its immediacy with the problems attaching to God in Himself, we can defer the former until the next chapter and continue at present to investigate Hegel's view of the ontological status of the Holy Trinity in relation to this "world".

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[1] Enzyklopädie, §§ 50, 151, 573; Philosophie der Religion, I, pp. 195-199, 254-257.

[2] Enzyklopädie, § 50. See also §§ 24, 112 Zusätze.

Hegel distinguishes his view from Spinoza's in that his God cannot be described definitively as absolute Substance. Absolute Substance is indeed a moment in God's inner nature, but this moment is aufgehoben in the Notion of Geist, or the Subjecthood of God. God as absolute Substance is the thought of an overwhelming Object, set over against our consciousness and over against the world as the All over against nothing. But this thought, as merely the first abstract moment in the definition of God in Himself, is only the first moment of the first moment in the total dialectic of alienation and reconciliation. Absolute Substance is, as it were, God the Father without the Son or the Spirit, *i.e.* God "not yet" Geist, not the true Notion of God to which the world is in fact related.[1] Only if God were merely the absolute Substance would the world as the other of God be an illusion, a nothing. But since God is Geist, Subject, Holy Trinity, movement into otherness is a moment of the divine Notion itself, so that the world can stand, at least provisionally, as the actual other of God.

However, while God as Substance is aufgehoben, it is not simply denied. What use does Hegel make of this moment of substantiality in the divine life? This question is closely related to Hegel's interpretation of the doctrine of God as Creator. For example, in the *Enzyklopädie* Hegel defines God in Himself, as the first moment in the dialectic in which the world comes to be and is reconciled, in this way:

> a)In the moment of *universality*, the sphere of pure *Thought* or the abstract element of *Essence*, there is the absolute Geist, which is in the first place the *presupposed*, not however as an enclosed fixity *[verschlossen Bleibende]*, but as *substantial Power*, in the reflectional determination of causality the *Creator* of heaven and earth. . .[2]

That is by no means the end of this teutonic-sized sentence, but it will do for the time being. In speaking of "universality", of course, Hegel means that all the conditions are categoreal, that in this abstract moment there is no particular standing over against Geist and detached from the pure play of the categories - no recalcitrant otherness which merely *is*, without the necessity attaching to the universal. Only "pure Thought" has this universality and necessity, and is as such the proper milieu for God's being-in-Himself. Yet far from being on that account a mere fiction, this divine Notion is the "Essence", the "presupposed" in relation to the cosmos, in virtue of which it is indeed a cosmos and not a chaos, in virtue of which the existing world exhibits unity and teleological movement. Nor is this "Essence", this divine Notion, merely an "enclosed fixity" of abstract forms, but is rather a self-reflexive movement containing in principle the projection into particularity _etc._ But now Hegel speaks of this divine Notion as a "substantial Power"! - and goes on as he commonly does in this connection, to refer this Power to God as Creator. But how is creative Power to be embraced in this realm of "pure Thought"? It is obvious that reference to the Creator cannot be taken at face value in Hegel's treatment. No, God is conceived as Creator only "in the reflectional determination of causality" - _i.e._ in terms of a category of the abstract Understanding which is quite inadequate to express the ultimate relation. God as Creator, understood in this quasi-causal way, can only be a popular expression, a religious representation. Hence this causal way of thinking about God is immediately amended in the part of the sentence not yet quoted: He may be conceived as Creator, "but in this eternal sphere much more only" as the Begetter of "Himself as His Son." Then Hegel completes the sentence by neatly summarizing the view with which we are already familiar, of the self-reflection of the Trinity as the positing of a distinction which is "eternally aufhebt" _etc._[1] But in what sense can this eternal Notion be said to be a "substantial Power" such that it is appropriate, in a representational way, to speak of God as "Creator of heaven and earth"? After all, while a religious representation lacks the adequate form of the Notion, it is not on that account simply wrong. If God were not, in some sense, a substantial, productive Power which brings the multiplicity of the world into existence, it would not be appropriate to speak of Him as Creator even in a representational way.

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[1] *Philosophie der Religion*, I, pp. 187-192; *Enzyklopädie*, § 112.

[2] *Enzyklopädie*, § 567.

Hegel goes on in the next paragraph to speak of the "creation". In the second moment, the moment of particularity, "this concrete eternal

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[1] _Loc. cit._

Essence is the presupposed, and its movement is the creation of Appearance," i.e. our empirical cosmos.[1] Now, to speak of the external world as an appearance does not mitigate the problem. Even in those philosophies which set a non-empirical reality over against a mere empirical illusion, it is necessary to account for the appearance of this illusion: what is the condition in the reality which produces it? At least it must be shown how, in the nature of the reality, the illusion is in principle possible. But for Hegel the problem is much more acute, since his "Appearance" (Erscheinung) is not simply illusion (Schein). Insofar as it does not correspond to its Notion it is not fully actual, but Hegel does not deny that it exists, that it has a hold on reality. It is somehow created - by God! This movement into Appearance is in fact, he goes on, "the diremption [Zerfallen] of the eternal moment of mediation, the Son which is in unity [with the Father], into the independent opposition" characterized by the alienation of Geist from itself, finite Geist.[2] At the same time, of course, this opposition to Geist which takes up an independent standpoint is the heaven and the earth. But this independent opposition is possible only in virtue of the presence of the mediated element, the Son, in the divine Notion itself. Still, the projection of this internal mediation into an "independent opposition" is a radical movement; the mediated element within the Godhead may account for its possibility, but it cannot as such account for its actuality. What is the nature of this "movement", this "diremption"?

According to the language of religious representation, God acts. God creates by the medium of an act. Now, speaking in the Philosophy of Religion of "God in His eternal Idea," God "yet so to say before or outside the creation of the world," Hegel says that this God "is not yet posited in His Reality, but is still only the abstract Idea." Is there any way in which this abstract Idea can be considered the Creator? Yes, Hegel immediately adds,

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[1] Ibid., § 568.

[2] Loc. cit.

> God is the Creator of the world; it belongs to His Being, to His Essence, to be the Creator: insofar as He is not [understood as] Creator, He is erroneously conceived.[1]

This statement has implications of the utmost importance concerning God's relationship with the world. However, what he means in the first instance in saying that it is God's Essence to be the Creator is that God eternally begets another within Himself, as Holy Trinity; that is the context in which this statement is made. In this eternal begetting it is clear that one cannot speak of an "act". So Hegel continues:

> That He is the Creator is not an actus, which would occur once - what is in the Idea is an eternal Moment, the eternal determination itself.[2]

But what of God's creation of the world? That is the point at which God's substantiality and God's capacity to act come into question.

One aspect of the traditional religious representation of God's act as Creator is clearly ruled out for Hegel: there can be no question about a beginning of the world, a single point at which all things come to be. Nor can the usual alternative, that the world is eternal, be seriously considered here, such an "eternity" being only a "bad infinite", the same thing over and over again. No, this issue belongs to the abstract Understanding. Reason has to do with God's relation to the world, in an absolute sense; the doctrine of God's Preservation of the world is categoreally the same as the doctrine of Creation.[3] Thus even God's creative relation to the world cannot be "an actus, which would occur once." But in fact, to carry the investigation further, it becomes clear that it is only in a very spedial sense that one can speak of God as acting at all. "Act", in the ordinary sense, is of course a finite category. God's "activity" must therefore be simple, "only one and the same, not a genuine manifold of different acts now and afterward, outside one another etc."[1] The simple relation of a cause to a series of effects is not an adequate model for understanding God's relation to the ongoing reality of the world. Stace expresses Hegel's model suggestively, if loosely, when he interprets Hegel as meaning that "the world flows from the universal, not as an effect flows from its cause in time, but as a conclusion flows from its premises."[2] Stace tends, by a too-rigid application of this model, to make Hegel into an idealist of a simpler sort than he really was. Still, the logical analogy is more suggestive than the causal one. For God in Himself is an "abstract Idea", which cannot relate itself causally, "externally", to the world. Yet the logical analogy also leaves some questions unanswered, because the world is evidently a manifold of physical objects related to one another externally, and not a system of ideas. So how can the divine Idea account for its existence?

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[1] Philosophie der Religion, III-1, p. 74.

[2] Loc. cit.

[3] Ibid., III-1, pp. 87-88.

"God" in this abstract mode is frequently said to "will" the finite world. But on Hegel's terms God could not in fact "will" otherwise. For we recall that God in Himself, as "still only an abstract Idea", is "not yet posited in its Reality." He becomes a concrete Reality only insofar as His nature becomes incorporated in this other, this world which is so posited, as its absolute realization. Thus, "Without the world God is not God."[3] This bold statement serves to expose what it finally means for Hegel that God is essentially, necessarily the Creator, indeed that God must be a Trinity in the sense explained. God's relationship with the world is constitutive of His Being. That is why movement into other-

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1. Ibid., III-1, p. 86.

2. Stace, op. cit., p. 22.

3. Philosophie der Religion, I, pp. 146-148.

ness must be a moment within the Godhead itself. In fact, the conditions which God contains in His ideal nature must not only make the world possible, but necessary. The very reality of God depends upon this necessity that there be a world to which God is related, that the eternal begetting within His trinitarian Idea be recapitulated in His relation to a world. It is clear how God's triune nature provides the _possibility_ of a world so related to God in its categoreal structure. What is not clear is how the existence of the world required by the divine Idea is _necessarily_ brought about in virtue of the conditions present in that Idea; indeed, it is not clear how it _can_ be so brought about. Certainly Hegel's Idea is a strange sort of idea. It must somehow be productive of an other-than-itself in which alone it can become actual.

This problem, of how the Idea can be the Creator of the empirical world, is strictly parallel to another issue over which Hegel interpreters have cracked their brains, the problem of the movement from the Logic to the philosophies of Nature and Geist. In fact there is evidence to suggest that the problems are not only parallel, but forms of the same problem. In the introduction to the large _Logik_, Hegel does identify the Notion which the Logic treats with the Notion of God in Himself. Logic is a "kingdom" of pure Thought, but Thought which is the inner Truth and telos of all Reality. Nature and History are applied Logic. But as for Logic itself:

> _This kingdom is the Truth, as it is in and for itself without a veil._ One can therefore say that this content _is the description of God, as He is in His eternal Essence before the Creation of Nature and finite Geist._[1]

It is difficult to know how seriously to take this bold statement. Kroner cites it, with good reason, to support his thesis that God in Himself is all Logos, and not the Holy Trinity. It would indeed be quite impossible simply to identify the content of the Logic with Hegel's exposition of the Trinity; the analysis of the three chief moments in the Logic is quite different from that of the Trinity, particularly in the relations of the moments to one another. Of course, in the light of Hegel's well-known doctrine of the superiority of Philosophy over Religion in point of form, we might conclude that the exposition of the Trinity simply represents the truth, in an inadequate form; while the Logic, as the properly philosophical exposition of the Notion, states the truth in the true form. Such an interpretation would accord well with Hegel's total view of the System, and he may have had some such scheme in mind when he wrote the passage which I have quoted from the large Logik. But he never explains the relationship between the doctrine of the Trinity and the Logic in this way, and this lack of explicit statement is especially significant in the Philosophy of Religion, with its detailed treatment not only of God in Himself, but also of the relation between Philosophy and Religion. Such an interpretation is difficult to square with what he has to say about the Holy Trinity.

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[1] _Wissenschaft der Logik_, I, p. 31.

Even though this point is left in unfortunate obscurity, however, the evidence would seem to justify us in seeing the relationship of God in His Notion to the world as parallel if not the same as the relation of the Logic to the philosophies of Nature and Geist. Despite the ambiguities mentioned, this conclusion is very significant, and could provide the answer to our question about the ontological status of God in Himself. Unhappily, though, the obscurity of Hegel's transition from Logic to the Philosophy of Nature is notorious.[1] The Logic expounds the categoreal conditions of all that occurs in Nature and History. Its Idea defines the potentiality and the telos that is in things. On these terms, one can indeed say that the things are not what they ought to be unless this Idea is realized (though, as Hegel saw, this in itself would be an empty statement, the positing of the Idea as a "mere ought"); or one can psychologize the situation as Hegel does when he talks about the dissatisfaction of a thing when it has not realized its Idea. But the Idea itself contains nothing which compels its realization in existence. The Idea can provide, so to say, a formal and final cause, but not a material or efficient cause. It cannot account for the existence of the world whose categoreal conditions it provides. Of course, the Idea is

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[1] Wissenschaft der Logik, II, pp. 505-506; Enzyklopädie, §§ 244ff. Some of the expositors do undertake to defend this transition, but never in the rather mystifying terms which Hegel himself employs at this point. Findlay denies, properly I think, that either the creationism or emanationism suggested by Hegel's language at this point should be taken very seriously. Rather, "God, the pure-self-active Idea, would be a mere abstraction without a Universe to unify and interpret, and a wholly abstract God or Idea is a contradiction in terms." Again, "The Idea, therefore, only 'decides' to release its

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moment of Specificity in the wealth of Nature, inasmuch as Specificity without Species would be senseless and contradictory." (J. N. Findlay, Hegel: a Re-Examination /London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1958/, pp. 268-269) This is true enough, but it only serves to show that the Idea requires a world, that it can in its inner nature account for the structure of the world, but it does not show how in fact the Idea can account for the existence of the world. Of course, since one must look at Nature and History in order to discover the Idea implicit in them, it would be senseless to attribute a moment of specificity to the Idea without the fact of detail and of species in Nature. But we must raise our question in terms of the expounded order of Reality, in which the Idea is said to be logically and metaphysically prior. It is not self-contradictory to say that the logical moment of specificity in this prior ground cannot account for the actual existence of species in an order which is not as such ideal. It must be shown how the incommensurability between the ideal and the existent can be overcome.

Of course one can, in effect, deny that there is any incommensurability. Stace, whose older work gives more detailed attention to the problem with a rather thorough discussion of the texts involved, saves the "deduction" in the end only by a significant alteration in the System: He upbraids Hegel for still finding some opacity to Reason in the objects of Nature - a trace of the unknown thing-in-itself. Hegel's true insight - if only he had carried it through! - was that things are composed entirely of universals, and therefore are thoughts through and through. This would indeed remove the difficulty, but only by collapsing not only the opacity but the externality, the otherness of Nature over against the Idea. But this would torpedo the whole System, would trivialize it into the most abstract kind of idealism; the glory of the concrete universal would be lost. This fundamental outlook on Hegel, while it enables Stace to be more admirably lucid and concise than any genuine exposition of the System can ever be, vitiates Stace's whole exposition, which is otherwise very helpful in detail. Op. cit., pp. 304ff.

For Marx the transition is simple enough. It simply constitutes the admission that the Notion is in fact Nature, only in an abstract, estranged form. Nature is the truth of the Notion! Karl Marx, Die Frühschriften, herausgegeben von Siegfried Landshut (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1953), pp. 285-286.

discovered in the world. Its realization presupposes the world. The Idea is not temporally prior to existence, in such wise that it must be able to produce the world at a later point in time. The priority of the Idea is logical, metaphysical. But this consideration cannot mitigate the question how in the expounded logical order of Reality, as distinguished alike from the order of discovery and the order of temporal progression, the Idea can be the ground of existence, can have the substantiality to insist upon its own structure as the categoreal structure of a developing existence, can express itself as an external existence alienated from its own ideal nature. How can the Idea rule the world, express itself as a world, without being real in itself as the presupposition of the world's reality?

It appears to me that at crucial points Hegel does in fact depart from his characteristic view that God in Himself is abstract Idea, and must do so in order to make this transition possible. He has a creationist string on his fiddle, with emanationist over-tones, a string which cannot be brought into perfect tune with the others because it presupposes that God in Himself is already a substantial Reality apart from the world. When he wishes to speak of the power by which the Idea generates a world, he must draw on whatever help he can get from this vaguely creationist outlook, and one gets the passages about the Idea's enjoying an "absolute Freedom" and resolving "to let the moment of its particularity . . . go forth freely as Nature."[1] Now, the Idea enjoys an "absolute Freedom" only when it has realized itself perfectly in existence, is already identical with its existing other. The abstract Idea, in itself, enjoys no absolute Freedom in relation to an existing world. It can be said already to possess the substantiality, the concreteness, presupposed by such Freedom, only by an illicit borrowing from the creationist view.

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[1] Enzyklopädie, § 244.

Hegel, of course, would deny having done anything of the sort. He would claim, on the contrary, that I have raised an illicit demand by insisting that the Idea must possess this sort of substantiality. The Idea has ontological priority over all other categories, is the ground of the substantial and real. The Absolute is fundamentally the Idea, in a sense in which it is not fundamentally the existent. Of course it is not the Idea abstractly considered, but the Idea which has gone outside itself into the existent and then has recovered itself in the existent. Yet it is the Idea, and not the existent, which defines the fundamental nature of the Absolute throughout the whole process. In this process, the moment of estrangement, the finite existent, is not simply set over against the Notion in such a way that it stands independently, on equal footing. It does not simply neutralize the Notion in such wise that the third moment is a mere "synthesis" of the two. Hegel points out the problem with a suggestive analogy: If the Notion and its negation were related like alkali to acid, then the Notion, the infinite, would be shorn of its properties, and the "synthesis" would be a mere neutralization. No, "the negation of negation" in the third moment "is not a neutralization; the infinite is the affirmative, and only the finite is the Aufgehobene." The triad is, and must be, asymmetrical, so that the infinite is not lost but is concretely realized in the third moment - for this is the life of the Idea, the basis of its advance. The Idea posited in the first moment is not merely one of two finites set over against one another, but is the truth of the finite moment, the ideality, the essential infinity of the finite. "This ideality of the finite is the chief proposition of Philosophy, and therefore each genuine Philosophy is idealism."[1] Discussing the Idea at the end of the short Logik, Hegel declares that "The definition which declares the Absolute to be the Idea, is itself absolute." Again, "everything actual, insofar as it is true, is the Idea, and has its truth in virtue of the Idea alone." Hegel might address to me a remark he makes in the Zusatz to the same section:

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[1] Ibid., §95; see also § 215.

> It is too late now to ask for proof that the Idea is the truth. The proof of that is contained in the whole deduction and development of thought up to this point. The Idea is the result of this course of dialectic.[1]

The ontological primacy of the Idea was part of the polemic against Kant: Hegel's Idea, this Good, this Reason, is not a begger, not a mere ideal waiting and pleading for realization, is "not so impotent as merely to have a right or an obligation to exist without actually existing."[2] It goes ahead and exists! - because, as the Logic shows, it is ontologically more ultimate than existence, is the ground of existence into which existence, being, and all my other "substantial" categories are aufgehoben.

However, it should be recalled that the Idea is the "result" of Hegel's "course of dialectic" only because it is presupposed with the very first category (Supra, pp. 69-70). Furthermore, it seems to me that a dilemma arises for Hegel at this point, which we shall wish to discuss in detail a bit later (Chapter IV, § v): If existence is not the genuine other of the Idea, then the Idea is its ground only in virtue of the fact that its otherness is sheer illusion and Hegel's idealism is no longer "dialectical" and his universal no longer "concrete". Or if existence is the genuine other of the Idea, then it is hard to see how the Idea can be its ground without possessing the kind of productive power which must be borrowed from the creationist standpoint - according to which the Creator of the world is not an abstract Idea. In either of these cases, the System would no longer stand.

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[1] Ibid., § 213, following Wallace's translation.

[2] Ibid., § 6. See also § 51: "Certainly it would be strange if the Notion . . . were not rich enough to include so poor a category as Being . . ." (again, following Wallace)

iii. Hegel's Theodicy and the Doctrine of Creation

At any rate, let us see what follows from this primacy of the Idea. Certainly it follows, as Hegel declares in his Philosophy of History, that

> the truly good, the universal divine Reason, is also the power which realizes itself.[1]

This good, this Reason, is God - "not merely as an idea in general" in His involvement in World-History, "but as an efficacy [Wirksamkeit]." No other power takes precedence over this. What appears merely to happen, what appears to be arbitrary, disorganized, chaotic, is really ruled by the divine Idea. "God rules the world!" - despite all appearances to the contrary. Hegel's theodicy, however, is coherent only on the basis of his idealism. For Reason is the divine, and the divine Idea is the content of Reason: History is ruled by Providence, because "the reality which appears wrong" is in truth "grounded in the Idea itself." Thus one who would wish to suggest that Actuality must be the ground of the Idea rather than the contrary, is put in the position of denying the doctrine of Providence (the which be far from me and from the heart of any pious man!). Certainly the belief in the providential Lordship of God over the world is necessary for a Christian; any "theism" without such a belief is empty. But there is at least reason to question whether the Christian doctrine of Providence really does lead in the same direction as a theodicy based on the ontological primacy of the Idea: Quite consistently on his grounds, Hegel draws the conclusion that the good is in fact perfectly realized in the world. He remarks that it is characteristic of youth to conceive the good as an ideal (does he mean Kant, writing on the categorical imperative in his sixties and seventies?), and to be forever dissatisfied with the current state of affairs. But the mature see the worth of things as they are. Indeed, "the insight to which philosophy ought to lead us is that the real world is as it ought to be . . ."[1] This proposition is not precisely the same as the proposition that whatever is, is right.

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[1] Philosophie der Geschichte, I, p. 77 (Sibree Tr. p. 36).

It is certainly not true for Hegel that the Good is perfectly realized in every historical epoch or every event. The "real world" is a world in process; the Idea is not consummately realized all at once. It is indeed the tension of Reason, posited normatively over against the existing imperfect state of affairs in an epoch, which propels History on to a new epoch which will more adequately realize the Good. Freedom is the prime category in terms of which the realization of the Good in History is discussed. But in the first epoch, in the Oriental world, only one is free (the despot), and in the Greek and Roman worlds only some are free (the citizens or the aristocrats). Only in the Germanic world, informed by Christianity, does Freedom find the universal realization adequate to its Notion.[2]

But it does get realized, and must by necessity do so. The Good, Reason, God's Will, must be accomplished within History - not eschatologically, outside History, but as the culmination of a process within History itself. In this culmination the world and God come into perfect unity, as we shall see. This glorious bringing in of the sheaves is not to be a "phantasy . . . in heaven." The reconciliation of God with man is to be in a real community, which is "the Kingdom of God on earth in the Church."[3] Furthermore, every stage in History which contributes to the culmination is necessary, right for its time. It is indeed the purpose of the Philosophy of History to show how each epoch is a necessary moment in the accomplishment of the final reconciliation.

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[1] Ibid., I, pp. 77-78 (Sibree Tr. pp. 36-37). See also Enzyklopädie, §§ 212, 235.

[2] Ibid., I, pp. 61-64, 167, 244-257 (Sibree Tr. pp. 18-20, 63, 104-110).

[3] Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie, Sämtliche Werke, Jubiläumausgabe herausgegeben von Hermann Glockner (Stuttgart: Fr. Frommanns Verlag, 1928), III, p. 116 (Haldane Tr. III, p. 21).

Does it follow, then, that the relation to this historical dialectic defines the only valid criterion for the worth of events, cultures, men? That all acts, all decisions, are good only in relation to their fulfillment of a necessary moment in this process? That the individual has significance, not in himself, but only in relation to the role he plays in this teleological movement in World History? Hegel wishes to avoid such a conclusion. He suggests that there is a kind of direct, vertical relation to the Good, a moral or religious criterion that is binding on all men regardless of this role in history, focussing precisely on their mode of existence as individuals. The worth attaching to men and their deeds, in this dimension, cannot be reduced or relativized by any other frame of reference in which they may be viewed. Seen in this light, acts are good or evil, men display virtue or vice, regardless of the extent of their influence or the breadth of their culture or knowledge. Under the narrowest circumstances of life, in the situation of the simplest peasant, at the widest remove from the arena in which the foreward movement of the world-historical Geist is being accomplished, this categorical dimension of religion and morality "in its concentrated fervor and limitation to a few simple relationships of life has infinite worth." Nor can the most cultivated man, under his more favorable and influential conditions of life, evade this bar of simple justice, so far as his moral worth as an individual is concerned.

> This inner center, this simple region of the right of subjective freedom, the seat of will, decision, and action, the abstract content of conscience, that in which the responsibility and worth of the individual, his eternal judgment is contained, remains inviolate; it is excluded from the loud noise of world history, not only in its external and temporal alternations, but also in the aspects which involve the absolute necessity of the Idea of Freedom itself.[1]

This simple, direct moral and religious dimension may be variously fulfilled at various times; it does not necessarily embody unchanging moral laws. But it is categorical, it presses on every man an inescapable responsibility for what he is and what he does - quite apart from the role that this being and doing may play in the universal dialectical movement of History which is the content of Hegel's theodicy.

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[1] Philosophie der Geschichte, I, p. 109 (Sibree Tr. p. 37).

However, the other side of the coin is that the providential course of World History has nothing essentially to do with this dimension; more important, the standpoint of this theodicy has a higher claim, absolutely considered, than has this categorical moral and religious standpoint. The vertical relationship of each man to the Good has nothing essentially to do with the actual realization of the Good in History. From the absolute standpoint of Geist's self-fulfillment, it is simply irrelevant.

> For World History moves on a higher plane than that on which morality has its proper position. . . . What the aim of Geist in and for itself requires and accomplishes, what Providence does, transcends the obligations and the imputability and demand which rests upon individuality in regard to its morality. . . . from this standpoint the claims of the moral sphere must not be raised against world-historical deeds and those who accomplish them, where these claims do not belong. The litany of private virtues - modesty, humility, charity and forbearance _etc._ - must not be raised against them.[1]

So we have two domains, the moral and the world-historical, which apply quite different standards of judgment to events and the men who shape them. The distinction may seem quite innocuous. Obviously the historical importance or influence of an event is quite independent of its moral character. Hegel makes the point that the man who opposes the necessary movement of World History at a certain point may well be morally superior to those who advance it; indeed the world-historical individual may be a monster, morally considered. But the decisive consideration is that the world-historical movement defines finally and absolutely - not merely in one limited aspect - the activity of God in the world; it is indeed coincident with God's own self-actualization! Therefore the man who opposes the forward march of World History may be morally justified, but his stand has "only a formal rectitude, already deserted by living Geist and by God".[1] Hegel's point is not only that "living Geist" judges events otherwise than by inflexible moral laws; any believer in a living God could agree to that. But for Hegel, any moral standpoint which opposes the stream of things is as such abstract and merely formal: for the concrete activity of "living Geist" is precisely coincident with the course of the world's progressive history. God has no other reality. It is true that the moral individual as such is said to possess the complete Notion of religion and morality, however limited its application may be in his particular circumstances; that is the basis of his unconditional moral worth. But he possesses this Notion only in its "universal essentiality in itself"[2] and not in its concreteness as selfßactualizing Geist immanent in the world. The moral domain does not simply stand alongside the world-historical, it is aufgehoben in the world-historical, the world-historical contains the sole substantial truth of the moral. The moral domain as such, what I have called the vertical relation to the Good - as such - has in fact no ontological ground on which to stand at all.

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[1] _Ibid._, I, pp. 171-172 (Sibree Tr. p. 67). See also _Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts_, § 345.

Indeed, it is well-known that according to Hegel the "world's court of justice" (Weltgericht) is ultimately none other than World History itself, or the universal and unlimited Geist of the World (Weltgeist) into which the limited Geist of every particular people (Volksgeist) is aufgehoben. In this connection, Hegel uses "Weltgeist" and "Weltgeschichte" interchangeably. The total progressive movement of history is precisely the abstract, implicit Geist progressively becoming explicit, becoming actual. This total process is the sole truth, the sole reality, and therefore exercises the absolute right of judgment over every historical epoch and finally every historical event that takes place within it ("its right is the highest of all"). In its culmination and therefore in the total movement which issues by necessity in this culmination, it is the true infinite, the infinite into which every finite movement is aufgehoben and thereby receives its final status and significance.[1] No adjudication of an event takes precedence over this, because in this process the nature of God Himself realizes its absolute definition. The precedence of World History as the world's court of justice, over every other "right", every other standard of judgment, is evident in the position it occupies in the architectonic of the System: World History appears as the final moment in the Philosophy of Right, or as the moment beyond it, in which the philosophy of politics, right, morality, is aufgehoben. According to the nature of the System, this designation means that the ultimate "right" of World History is not only the logical outcome of the dialectic of right, but its fundamental presupposition and key throughout.[2]

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[1] Loc. cit.

[2] Ibid., I, p. 109 (Sibree Tr., p. 37).

Hegel does not thereby give the precedence to the brute succession of facts as such. The decisive consideration is that Reason, Geist rules the course of World History.

> World History is furthermore not merely the court of justice in virtue of its power, i.e. the abstract and unrational necessity of a blind fate, but because it is Reason in and

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[1] Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts, §§340ff. See also Enzyklopädie, §§ 548ff.

[2] Cf. B. M. Telders, "Die Geschichte als Gottes Gericht", III Verhandlung des dritten Hegelkongresses vom 19. bis 23. April 1933 in Rom, herausgegeben von B. Wigersma, Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr, 1934, p. 244: The idea of History as God's court of justice "crowns the hegelian Philosophy of Right. It is at the same time its end and (just for that reason) its principle. Whoever does not understand this proposition cannot understand the Philosophy of Right in its total compass; whoever is not able to acknowledge it must reject the essential content of the entire Philosophy of Right."

> for itself and its being-for-itself in Geist is Knowledge; only out of the Notion of its Freedom is it the necessary development of the moments of Reason and thus its self-consciousness and its Freedom, - the explication and realization of the universal Geist.[1]

In spite of the coincidence of the world's history with Geist's self-realization, it is not after all a matter of indifference whether we say "history" or "Geist". Geist, presupposed as the Idea from the beginning, is the only agent in history whose activity is absolutely decisive. What is superceded and what is preserved in World History is not determined blindly or arbitrarily: the fine filteration process inherent in the becomingness of things is patterned in and by the rational divine Idea. It therefore exercises not merely a mad tyranny over things, destroying and preserving by caprice, but exercises rational judgment through the medium of a preordained dialectic within and between the epochs of the world's history. The dialectically progressive realization of the universal Idea within the welter of particular creatures and events in the passing show of history constitutes the ultimate justification of history and the ultimate judgment on every event that composes it.[2]

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History itself, then, is the "judge" of the world, because God is the teleological principle striving immanently for realization in this world process; i.e. God is the end of the process, the end which is contained virtualiter in the beginning, as the Idea in itself (see Chapter II, section iii above). The ontological primacy of the Idea is thus the basis of Hegel's theodicy; but this optimistic interpretation of history has been purchased at a high price. The apotheosis of the world is absolutely coincident with the actualization of God, apart from which process God has no actuality. That is why God cannot be the Creator, the eternally actual Being upon whom the distinct existence of the world depends. How great a price is this, really? What is involved in the doctrine of God as Creator? I think the question is not simply about a cosmological principle, of whether the world had a first beginning, but about the basic nature of God's relation to the world as its Judge and Redeemer. Without attempting to elucidate the doctrine of Creation in detail, I shall attempt to clarify the issue by suggesting three indispensable criteria involved in any serious interpretation of this doctrine. These three criteria, it will be evident, are the fixed points which the traditional doctrine of creatio ex nihilo attempted to preserve.

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[1] Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts, § 342.

[2] Telders (op. cit.) points out that World History exercises "judgment" over events not only in the moral sense (Gericht) but in the logical sense as well (Urteil), by bringing the universal to bear on the particular. But the logical as such is aufgehoben just as is the moral as such, and finally comes to the same thing: World History is both Urteil and Gericht, because both of these forms of "judgment" have the same presupposition, i.e., the priority and ultimate precedence of the Idea. "In the Notion of Justice as Idea the image of judging is aufgehoben in the same way as in the Notion of History as Idea the category of judgment (Urteils) is. The identity of history with the highest Right or Justice, posited in the hegelian proposition, therefore becomes understandable as soon as Justice and History are both grasped as Idea." p. 225. See 230-233.

First of all, to say that God creates the world out of nothing expresses the conviction that the world does not partake of God's own substance. Therefore:

1) God's mode of being is unique and radically independent of the world, with a nature, a unity, an integrity of its own. God's being is not exhausted by His relations with the world. Only so can God be judgmental over the world, the substantial subject of an absolute criterion of the worth of every event in the world's history. Every event becomes significant in itself, every decision is responsible, because it is related directly to the will and the eternal judgment of God. Furthermore - and this should be said both first and last - the freedom of God, of which God's independence

from the world is one aspect, expresses itself redemptively in free grace. The divine activity is grounded in the divine being alone; no conditions are imposed on it by the world. God can will and act quite contrary to cosmic process, can break into the cosmic process with a word of judgment and of grace that is quite foreign to "our ways and our thoughts".

2) The reverse side of this distinction is the substantiality of the world as distinct from God. The world is not an extension or emanation of the divine substance. Its creatures are given a life of their own - given this life by God, yet given it as their own. The world, in itself, is irreducibly real and not an appearance; its events are "dramatic" in the sense that they are not determinate until they occur, and having occurred they are irremovable conditions involved in the future course of events. Men whose decisions help to shape these events are eternally responsible before God for these decisions. These responsible creatures are capable of defiance over against God, even though this defiance is permitted only in virtue of God's patience. For although God rules the world, He is not the inner being of the world. This world, as a separate reality in its own right, contains in itself data for genuine (if limited) knowledge; i.e. it is not an illusory husk hiding the real datum of knowledge. In this sense the doctrine of Creation is a basis of metaphysical and epistemological realism respecting the world.[1] The world is the

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[1] This is a convenient place to refer to M. B. Foster's interesting lecture on "The Opposition between Hegel and the Philosophy of Empiricism", published in *Verhandlungen des dritten Hegelkongresses vom 19. bis 23. April, 1933 in Rom* (herausgegeben von B. Wigersma, Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr, 1934, pp. 79-96). It is noteworthy, in connection with our present point, that Foster sees the opposition of Hegel to empiricism as being based primarily on his failure to accept the Christian doctrine of Creation. Interpreting Hegel's God as a Demiorgos rather than a Creator, Foster argues that this view of God not only vitiates Hegel's use of other Christian ideas, but vitiates his use of the immediacies of the world as data of genuine knowledge.

It should be said, however, that the realism I find implied theater of genuine conflicts, among real beings - which are nonetheless "creatures". We shall return to these issues respecting the nature of the world in the next chapter.

However, if creatio ex nihilo expresses the ontological separation of God and the world, it also expresses the dependence of the world on God, since God is the subject of the act of creation.

3) Therefore we must add the final and decisive consideration that God gives the world its existence and preserves it in existence. The world is not a kind of god over against God, does not have its being in itself; i.e. while it has a being of its own, it is the being which it has received by God's fiat. The creature is therefore capable of rebellion, of sin, but the creaturely word of sin does not have equal rights with the divine word of grace, does not have the possibility of standing forever as an intransigence against which God is powerless. The independence of the world is only provisional, the consequence of God's act of creation, an act of which, however, God is eternally the subject and the world the object. God and the world are not equal partners in a common enterprise. The relationship between them is absolutely one-sided, the relationship is of the nature of act, and God's act is forever the first and the last, in every case the decisive act. God is absolutely free with respect to world. From nothing He created it, and to nothing it would return were it not for His continuing activity of creation (preservation). God absolutely transcends the world, in this radically asymmetrical relationship, only in the sense that the world has no power to compel the divine being and acting in any way. But God is free even to transcend this transcendence, free to hearken to the world and to

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(continued) in the doctrine of Creation does not provide a simple solution to the problem of knowing what is real in the world. Things are not simply what they seem. All that is being denied here is the contention that the world has a divine inner being, such that if God is real then the world and its "things" are unreal.

act on the world, free even to act in the mode of complete immanence in the world. Such immanence, however, is not a formal ontological definition of the relation of God to the world, but depends upon the unconditional divine will itself.

The purpose of this excursus has not been to show that Hegel was unorthodox. He never claimed to be orthodox, at least in the form of his teaching; and it is anyway presumptious to catechize a great philosopher, especially after he is dead. Still, Hegel did claim to be a Christian philosopher. Even though in the nature of the case it would be a fruitless effort to measure Hegel's thought by the verbal formula of orthodoxy, it is certainly important to see what is at stake in his handling of certain basic theological doctrines, such as the nature of the relationship between God and the world. It should be evident, even in this sketchy excursus on the doctrine of creation, that the issues are only in a derived sense cosmological. They are indeed cosmological issues, but the premises on which they are based are at heart religious, in fact soteriological. The way in which one understands God's role as Judge and Redeemer is already involved in the understanding of the relation between God and the world.

Thus Hegel's theodicy, based as it is on the ideality of God and the ontological priority of this divine Idea as the ground and truth of the world, already involves quite a different view of judgment and redemption than that presupposed in the Christian doctrine of Creation. In the next chapter I shall discuss in detail the problem in relation to the view of redemption or reconciliation. What needs to be underlined here is the breach in the closely related view of divine judgment. Hegel's theodicy simply allows no divine judgment in the sense presupposed in the creationist standpoint. This fact is obscured, though, by a certain ambiguity regarding God's relationship to the world, which I mentioned in the preceding section. When Hegel is playing the creationist string on his fiddle, it does become possible to speak of a direct "vertical" moral judgment or criterion involved in each event. This motif is evident in his remarks on the "infinite" value of the moral and religious relationship of men during every age, quite apart from the course of world history, as mentioned earlier. What categoreal meaning can this claim have, if the actualization of God and hence of the category of the true infinite can only be realized at the end of the historical process? It is coherent to speak in this way only if God is an ever-present substantial power, fully and eternally realized over against the world. The eternal God, and not world history, would have to be the Judge of the world.[1] That is, one would need a realistic doctrine of God, as substantial Creator and not as "abstract Idea". One finds such an ultimate theological realism implied on many of Hegel's pages, and must be in the background whenever the critical theme is played.

Hegel's theodicy, however, tends to submerge the critical motif in his philosophy. "Moral" judgments may be made respecting the relation of events to certain abstract ideals, but such judgments have nothing to do with the relation of the world to God. If the history of the world is the judge of the world, there is no substantial standpoint from which history itself can be judged. History as a whole must necessarily be good, and every event within it which is genuinely of "world-historical" significance must be right for its time, as contributing to that whole. In that case it does indeed follow that "the real world is as it ought to be" - and must be so by definition. It has frequently been observed among Hegel scholars that in the course of Hegel's career as a philosopher the justification of past and existing institutions gradually displaced the criticism of these institutions. This development is no accident, nor is it to be accounted for by the possibility that Hegel became personally more conservative as he grew older. The engulfing of the critical motif in an accommodationist "theodicy" is directly related to Hegel's progress in building a self-referential idealistic System. For the possibility of a System as well as the possibility of this theodicy is predicated upon the ontological primacy of the Idea over existence as such and the Idea's total immanence within the significantly historical. The tension is never entirely broken between the critical theme ("the rational is the real") and the accommodationist theme ("the real is the rational"); but as the architectonic structure of the System becomes more complete the critical theme is gradually muted and the creationist themes appear more and more arbitrary and mysterious. From the standpoint of Reason in its identity with World-history, the creationist outlook and the view of divine activity and divine judgment over against the world that are implied in it are seen to belong to the empty+ oppositions of the abstract Understanding.

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[1] This is not to deny that some view of inherent moral worth would be possible even if God were left out of account entirely. But then it would be merely rhetorical to speak of such inherent worth as "infinite" or "eternal".

iv. The Implicit Unity of Divine and Human Geist

We are now in a position to discuss Hegel's famous affirmation of the implicit unity of the divine and human natures. For having uttered this proposition - and he uttered it very often - Hegel has brought down upon his head the ecstatic blessings of folk with a mystical bent, and the anathemas of orthodoxy old and new. It is this sort of affirmation which the Papists point to as the true outcome of Protestantism - it shows what can happen when one forsakes the guidance of Peter's See. Protestant orthodoxy, on the other hand, sees it as the inevitable outcome of philosophical tampering with the Gospel, and ends by denouncing Thomism and Cultural Protestantism. But we shall not find it necessary to do anything very rash. On the basis of what has already been said, we can see at once that the crucial word in the proposition is "implicit", and shall now proceed to investigate the proposition with a minimum of thunder and lightning.

The fact that the unity of the divine and human natures is said, at least in the first instance, to be implicit (an sich) indicates that we are dealing with the Notion and not with an existent situation. Man, "because he is Geist", is implicitly "the divine Idea itself". But Hegel stresses that this "truth of" man, his unity with God, is not his "natural" - i.e. existential - condition. Man embodies this Idea

> not insofar as he is man, but (in) his inner Substance;
> not (as he) really is as finite Geist, (but in) his Truth,
> as he does not immediately exist . . .[1]

In the same way, man is essentially good, but he is good only insofar as he is Geist. That man is good cannot mean that he is immediately so, since in that case no reconciliation would be necessary, and there would be no life in historical process. Nevertheless "he is implicitly Geist, Rationality . . . created according to the image of God." This claim is the very basis of reconciliation, is the condition which makes reconciliation possible.

> But the difficulty, the double meaning of the proposition lies in the determination of 'an sich'. Man is good an sich; with this one intends to have said everything, but this Ansich is just the one-sidedness in virtue of which not

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[1] Philosophie der Religion, III-1, pp. 98-99. Quoted from Hegel's own rough manuscript.

> everything is said at all. Man is good an sich: that means that he is good only in an internal way, in his Notion, and therefore not in his reality.[1]

That is, man's existence as such is not necessarily good or in unity with God. That he does not possess this unity immediately in fact constitutes the estrangement of his immediate existence. We have examined the doctrine of the Notion in a general way; but, now, what precisely can it mean to attribute goodness and unity with God to man's Notion? What can this Notion have to do with him as an existing being? These are the questions we must put to Hegel in this section. We may proceed to these questions, however, by trying to answer a more general question: Why is it important to Hegel's program to affirm this implicit unity? In brief, the answer is that if there were not an ontological point of identity between God and man there could be no relationship between them at all. Let us examine this proposition more closely:

One of Paul Tillich's contributions to contemporary thought has been a richness of analysis which has supplied many useful rubrics, distinctions which bring the student quickly to basic issues of philosophical theology. It will be helpful for us to employ one of his most suggestive at this point, enunciated especially in his little essay on "The Two Types of the Philosophy of Religion".[2] The "two types" Tillich has in mind are what he calls the "ontological" and the "cosmological". In the cosmological type, God is conceived as essentially other than man, so that when man meets God he encounters a "stranger"; even in salvation God remains over against him. But in the ontological type,

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[1] Ibid., III-1, pp. 113-114.

[2] First published in Union Seminary Quarterly Review, I, 4, May, 1946; but recently and fortunately rescued from oblivion by its inclusion in the volume of Tillich's essays entitled Theology of Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 10-29.

> man discovers _himself_ when he discovers God; he discovers something that is identical with himself although it transcends him infinitely, something from which he is estranged, but from which he never has been and never can be separated.[1]

Hegel's philosophy of religion obviously belongs to this "ontological" type, which I think Tillich is correct in seeing as the type of the grand tradition in Western philosophical theology. In fact, although Tillich objects to the form which this outlook took in German Idealism, I would argue that Hegel has worked out a philosophical basis for it more elaborately and completely than anyone else has managed to do. He also developed a highly convincing polemic against the cosmological type, of which he saw the "skeptical conclusions" of Kant's philosophy as the logical outcome. Not only does he observe, with Tillich, that the cosmological type makes God into a being alongside other beings (a "bad infinite" which is really finite),[2] but also that it ends by rendering the knowledge of God impossible (and what salvation can there be without knowledge of God?). For the cosmological type is, on Hegel's terms, the outlook of the abstract Understanding, in which a subject attempts to grasp an alien object within abstract predicates. Kant had correctly shown that on this basis no proper "knowledge" of an absolute God is possible at all. But, as we have seen, Hegel considered that he had overcome this outlook, had assumed the standpoint of Reason itself. We are now in a better position to see what this means:

Kant had acknowledged that Reason would be the standpoint of God Himself. Again we see Hegel's debt to Kant: He quite agrees.

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[1] _Theology of Culture_, p. 10.

[2] See p. 68n above; also Hegel's _Philosophie der Religion_, III-1, pp. 7-8.

But it can also be man's standpoint, according to Hegel, if God Himself makes it so. And to deny that it can be man's standpoint is to deny that God has revealed Himself! But not only does Hegel declare that God has indeed revealed Himself, and in so doing has carried man beyond the limits of knowledge as defined by the Understanding; more than that, Hegel shows that it must be so, in the very nature of God. God as Geist is essentially self-consciousness: and Geist attains actualization by knowing Himself in man, God as the man's own true Geist knows Himself, which is to know Himself in man as identical with God. Thus man must know his own true self in God, because God can only know Himself as actual in man. This reconciliation is the realization of Reason itself, is in fact the goal of Reason in history; or, to say the same thing theologically, it is the work of divine Providence; or, to say it in still other ways, it is man's realization of his own Notion, and God's realization of His Notion. For in their Notion God and man are identical. The self-conscious grasp of this Notion is Reason. Speculative Philosophy, as the philosophy of Reason, has both the obligation and the capacity to know God. For it is not only true to say that Reason knows God: it is a tautology! This is the standpoint of Philosophy as well as revealed Religion, which stand together against Heathenism and Enlightenment, which "know not God".[1] Thus the Truth of Religion is indeed a "mystery" - but only for the heathen, and for those who cling to the standpoint of the Understanding. But, as we have noted in connection with the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the mystery is no longer mysterious for the believing Christian, or for the philosopher who has attained the standpoint of Reason. For the Truth of Religion is Reason itself.[1]

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[1] Enzyklopädia, § 564; see also Zusätze to §§ 36 and 136; Ph. der Religion, I, pp. 42, 57-62 et passim; Ph. der Geschichte, pp. 41-42 (Sibree Tr., pp. 15-16).

Reason, then, or Geist, is the point of identity between man and God, and is therefore the standpoint of true knowledge, indeed of absolute Knowledge. To know, in this exalted mode, is not merely to possess certain information external to us. For example, when Hegel speaks of God's being absolute Knowledge and Rationality, he does not mean simply that God knows everything, or that He acts according to certain rational principles. Rather, Rationality is so to speak a state of being, Knowledge and Rationality are in fact God's own state of being. This follows, on Hegel's terms, from the fact that God is Geist, or Holy Trinity. The self-relatedness of God's knowledge of Himself within the Godhead is God's Rationality. God is not merely rational, but is Rationality! not merely spiritual but Geist itself! Hegel's basic polemic against the Enlightenment could in fact be said to be based on the claim that there is no other kind of Rationality. And if a theology sets Faith over against true Reason, it has in fact set it over against God - even though it may be quite correct in rejecting the mere abstract "reasonings" of the Enlightenment.

Obviously, man cannot know God with a kind of "reason" alien to God's own nature. But if God can be known, can be apprehended rationally, it must be by the very same Reason that is in God. Therefore when Hegel denies that there are two kinds of Reason and two kinds of Geist, i.e. the divine and human, he is not claiming that everything im man that passes for thought and spirituality is identical with the divine. He is claiming rather that any true thought of God must be God's own thought of Himself. It must be, literally, the same thought. We do not "think God" as subjects reducing an object - a thing - in thought to certain abstract ideas in which this object participates. God is the Idea, the "concrete" Idea, grasped only in Himself. God is the Universal which is an Individual (though not to say a Particular), is embraced by no universality apart from Himself, no abstract universality; i.e. He is not an exemplar of an abstract idea, cannot be understood in terms of predicates, but is in Himself the concrete Universal. Therefore there can be in principle no thought of God which is not His own thought, His own Reason. Thus Knowledge, Reason, in this exalted sense is the divine Geist. It is not the reasoning of a particular mind qua particular. One participates in fact in this Reason only insofar as one has transcended particularity as such. The Phenomenology of Geist, the Philosophy of History, the Philosophy of Religion, the History of Philosophy, indeed the System as a whole - all show how in fact this transcendence, this ascension of the finite mind to God, takes place. But everything depends on this fundamental view of the unity of Reason, Geist: Reason is one, Geist is one! Therefore the only way God can be thought by any mind is for the mind to ascend to God, to think with God's own Reason. Reason in this sense is the divine in Man.[1]

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[1] Ph. der Religion, III-1, p. 77.

Hegel's affirmation of the implicit unity of the divine and human Geist, then, is based on two general premises: First, that it is the destiny of man to know God, or, which is the same thing, to be reconciled with God. Second, as just explained, this reconciliation can take place only insofar as the divine Reason itself is embodied in man. Divine Reason is not a quality of man's immediate existence as such, but the unity with the divine which presupposes it is man's destiny. However, as we have seen in some detail, it is fundamental to Hegel's outlook that nothing of importance to the life of Geist in the world can take place, in existence, which is not already true implicitly (*an sich*). The affirmation of the implicit unity of divine and human Geist is, in the first instance, a statement about man's destinyö but it is a destiny already implicit because this destiny is a *necessary* one, belonging to the nature of Geist itself. Unity with God is therefore from the very outset the truth or Notion of man's existence, the realization of which is necessary because Geist rules the world, and it is the nature of Geist to be for Geist, as we have seen. Man's actual unity with Geist is not merely a contingent possibility, something that may or may not take place. The Notion of Geist becomes actual, as Absolute Geist, in a process in which it is progressively reflected in the consciousness of man. Therefore the ascent of man to the divine standpoint belongs to a necessity within the nature of the divine itself; it does not depend upon a capacity present in man's immediate existence as such, but upon the absolute necessity of Geist to realize itself in self-consciousness.

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[1] Ph. der Religion, I, pp. 43-44, 66-69, 141-144.

> But the divine nature is itself only this: to be absolute Geist; therefore just the unity of the divine and human nature is itself the absolute Geist.
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> . . . Geist is therefore the living process in which the *implicit* [*an sich*] unity *of* the divine and human nature becomes *explicit* [*für sich*], is brought forth. That which is implicit must just on that account be brought forth (Destiny, Cultus), will thus be brought forth, evoked [*hereingezogen*], through the Idea itself; and nothing will be brought forth which is not implicit.[1]

This is the basis of Hegel's understanding of divine grace. Man's destiny as reconciled to God is quite independent of him in his immediate existence, may be far from his conscious intent - even though he is induced to contribute to it unconsciously, while intent on quite other matters, according to Hegel's doctrine of "the cunning of Reason". Nevertheless this Reason is man's true Notion. If man were not implicitly reconciled to God in this way, he could never become actually reconciled, since "nothing will be brought forth which is not implicit"! The implicit unity of the divine and human natures is the presupposition of the whole dialectic which culminates in their actual reconciliation.

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[1] *Ibid.*, III-1, p. 38. Quoted from Hegel's own rough manuscript.

But this presupposition is not to be found in man's immediate existence as such, i.e. it is not to be found in its complete and adequate form until man's existence is actually reconciled with the divine Notion. It is the truth of man as it is found, so to speak, in the mind of God: it is an absolute envisagement of man, which is realized in Actuality only insofar as it becomes his own envisagement of himself, gradually, in the dialectic of history. It is only in virtue of his involvement in the process, of this becomingness of Geist itself, that man can be said to have this character already implicitly.

However, so far we have been speaking of the pure case of man's immediate existence as such, i.e. of man simply in his estrangement. In fact man is not simply estranged, he does not live in the mode of simple immediate existence. He is an historical being, already involved in the dialectic of history of which Geist, Reason, is the guiding principle. Therefore his Reason, his self-consciousness as Geist, his unity with God, is already present in his consciousness in a more or less adequate form, depending upon the stage in the dialectic of history in which he lives and the degree of his personal cultivation. Of course his consciousness does not become adequate to the Idea until the moment of final reconciliation; but the progressive historical development of the religious consciousness, for example, is proof that the Idea is not "powerless". The progress in religious consciousness, which Hegel traces through the emergence of the various religions, is no accident but is precisely God's own gradual movement from implicit Idea to actual embodiment. The necessity of this development is the ground of the implicit identity of the divine and human natures, but in this necessary development that which is implicit as man's truth becomes progressively explicit as an actual fact of his conscious life.[1] According to Hegel, to be sure, religion grasps the Truth in an inadequate form even at best; still it is the Truth which it grasps in its various representations (Vorstellungen)(see Chapter V, § iv below). And in order to grasp the Truth at all, even in forms not adequate to its absoluteness, finite Geist must have a common ontological touch-stone with the infinite Truth; indeed, man's grasp of the Truth, in whatever form, is this ontological touch-stone, since the Truth is of the nature of communication, self-reflection in an other.

Hegel therefore comes down hard against the popular romantic piety, according to which the divine is to be discerned everywhere in Nature, but not in man or in man's works. On the contrary: precisely in man is Reason, Freedom, Geist becoming explicit. Precisely man bears the divine nature in a degree preeminent among all the creatures of the world. From the standpoint of Geist, nature is hardly more than the soil from which man arises, in man nature becomes alive and free. Geist is not merely an all-embracing form, found everywhere and common to everything in an undifferentiated sameness. Geist penetrates all things, to be sure, Geist is the universal. But it is the universal that progressively finds itself in the particular, the individual, becoming the unity of itself and its other. Precisely the history of mankind is the explication of this movement.[1] Reconciliation with God is not only its telos and (as Idea) its presupposition, but also - just because this reconciliation is its telos and presupposition - a developing quality within historical existence itself.

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[1] 1. Ibid., I, pp. 90-96, 149ff, 162ff. 176ff; III-1, pp. 8, 36-39.

That is why one can speak of estrangement in this historical existence; were there no such fundamental unity there could be no estrangement. Estrangement is a breach of this unity, but it belongs to the nature, the definition of this breach that it be overcome, and is indeed being overcome. Were the unity of the divine and human natures not implicit in the whole historical process, there would be no estrangement as such, but simply dead, meaningless immediacy. Nothing can be lost which is not first possessed, nothing separated which is not first united. Estrangement (or alienation) is obviously such a correlative term, presupposing a prior identity of the estranged. The priority is in this case logical, not temporal, of course. But just as to speak of an article's being lost implies not only an original possession but a legal claim to it even when it is lost, so estrangement from Geist for Hegel implies not only original unity but, so to speak, a never-to-be-relinquished ontological claim. Obviously, if God and man were simply identified, the normative, shaping character of the Idea would be lost; no reconciliation would be necessary, and there would be no dialectic of history. Yet if man's existence were simply cut off from Geist altogether, it could have no share in any reconciliation at all; there would be an ontological breach which could not be spanned. The Idea is dialectically related to its existing other, in such wise that it actually has a seat within the existence of that other, even in the situation of its relative otherness. For reconciliation to be possible, the"deep" of divinity must be able to call to a "deep" within human nature itself, a basic continuity of natures. Only so can man know God. There are clear affinities with one type of mysticism in this doctrine, and in its presuppositions - sufficient affinity for Hegel to quote Meister Eckhart, and apparently with approval:

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[1] Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie: Einleitung (neue kritische Ausgabe), pp. 171-177 (Haldane Tr, vol. I, pp. 65-72). There are considerable variations in the text at this point between the old edition on which the English translation is based and the new critical edition. I do not think there is a basic difference in outlook, I do not think the new edition forces us at this point to make any basic changes in the interpretation of Hegel's meaning. But the new edition is more guarded in its expression. Some of the most daring and suggestive expressions of the older edition are reduced to footnotes as possible variants in the new, or are cut out altogether. The old text, for example, speaks of God's evoking a "corresponding vibration", an "answering chord" in us (Haldane Tr., I, pp. 68, 70).

> "The eye with which God sees me is the eye with which I see Him; my eye and His eye are one. . . . If God were not, so would I not be; if I were not, so would God not be."[1]

The ontological ground which God and man share is not only the presupposition for any reconciliation, but for the actualization of God and man alike. Of course, where Hegel breaks with most forms of mysticism is in his view that this common ontological ground is to be found not in the flight from Reason, but in Reason itself - though they agree that there must be a flight from the mere Understanding as such.[2]

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[1] Quoted in Ph. der Religion, I, p. 257.

[2] See Enzyklopädie § 82, Zusatz. See also pp. 37-39 above.

At any rate, it is clear that Hegel belongs to what Tillich calls "the ontological type of the philosophy of religion": When man "discovers" God he discovers his own true self, from which he has never been separated even in his estrangement. It is an important question, in fact, to what extent this "ontological type" must share Hegel's basic presuppositions. At least in the hegelian form of this doctrine, there is a break with the Protestant teaching that man can be saved, "reconciled" by God's free grace alone. To be sure, though man may develop an affinity to the divine in the course of his involvement in the dialectic of history, such an affinity does not belong to the natural equipment of man in his immediate existence as such. The dialectic of history depends upon the immanence of Geist within it; in this sense the initiative in the process of reconciliation is with God. But a purely immediate creature, outside the dialectic of history, would not properly be a man at all. At any rate, God is no longer unequivocally the subject of grace, man is no longer unequivocally its object, its recipient. Indeed, for Hegel the divine nature requires this reconciliation with man for its own fulfillment, as much as the human nature does. If reconciliation necessarily presupposes this original unity, then God is not unconditioned in the giving of His grace. Man is not "justified by grace through faith" alone, but in virtue of a condition implicit in his own nature as a rational being involved in history.

Interestingly enough, Tillich seems to agree that Hegel's doctrine is subversive of the doctrine of justification. In an essay entitled "Estrangement and Reconciliation in Modern Thought",[1] published earlier than his essay on the two types of the philosophy of religion, but with the rubrics of the latter already in mind, Tillich says in criticism of Hegel that "this is reconciliation without justification". Tillich means that according to Hegel the world is already implicitly reconciled, God and man already implicitly united, even in the situation of estrangement of all existing beings. But as this recognition was caught up in the System it lost its cutting edge, was dulled, blunted by Hegel's affinities with mysticism and Enlightenment, each of which offers Hegel a perspective "from which he looks down at the harmony of a reconciled world".

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[1] Published in The Review of Religion, Vol. IX, November, 1944, Columbia University Press, pp. 5-19.

> But this is not the human situation. For man, reconciliation is always a paradox, a matter of soaring between uncertainty and certainty, of venturing faith and unexpected grace. Estrangement as an existential state does not imply reconciliation. . . . No analysis of life can give it. With these words I have formulated the criticism Hegel has received from all existential thinkers.[1]

I think Tillich has put his finger on the basic problem, especially with the observation that "estrangement as an existential state does not imply reconciliation". For in virtue of his doctrine of the implicit unity of the divine and human natures, Hegel is saying that estrangement does imply reconciliation. In fact, that is the whole purpose of the doctrine, to show that reconciliation is really built into estrangement, and indeed must be so in order for reconciliation in the historical process to be possible at all.

We have seen that Hegel, who was not afraid of a word, acknowledges that this scheme implies an idealism. Now, has Hegel not, by this recognition, seen the genuine presuppositions of "the ontological type" of philosophy of religion, has he not seen them more clearly than Tillich has? This is not the place to discuss Tillich's own philosophical theology; we need only hew to the issue which he raises in the two essays before us. One might indeed be surprised after reading Tillich's criticism of Hegel to go on to read his critique of Marx, where he observes, against Marx, that "Christian theology must endorse Hegel's statement that life cannot be reconciled if it is not reconciled within itself."[1] But one need not be surprised if one has noted carefully on the very first page of the essay that reconciliation - and salvation, regeneration, redemption, atonement, etc. all come to the same thing - is to be understood as "the re-establishment of an original but disrupted unity". And this, of course, is how it must be understood if one is operating in terms of the ontological type philosophy of religion. Tillich goes on to make this connection explicit. In a clear anticipation of his later essay on the "Two Types", he points out that it is only within the ontological type that estrangement can intelligibly involve an "absolute concern with an absolute demand for reconciliation"; and only in terms of this type can one intelligibly speak of the involvement of God in our suffering and estrangement.[2] Of course, If when one meets God one meets his own true self, then so long as one has not totally ceased to be one's self one has been in basic unity with God all the while. Estrangement is a disruption within the fundamental unity. Unfortunately, Tillich never becomes, in any of his writings, as explicit about the nature of this fundamental unity as Hegel is. But it is clear that for Tillich as for Hegel, this "original unity" is the indispensable condition for the final reconciliation of the estranged; and it is clear that this understanding of the situation is the determining and defining outlook of the ontological type of the philosophy of religion. Now, if one holds that this original unity is presupposed in the condition of estrangement then does not estrangement in fact imply reconciliation? We recall that this is the charge Tillich brings against Hegel; but is it not true for the "ontological type" philosopher in general, Tillich included? In one sense, of course, estrangement so understood does not imply reconciliation. Presumably there are some persons who are estranged in this sense, but never reconciled in Actuality. But this is also true for Hegel. Yet unless the original unity is only an empty, powerless abstraction, the reconciliation must eventually occur within mankind; there must at least be some who are to be reconciled. This is certainly true for Hegel, as we have seen. The Notion is not impotent! But can any philosopher of the ontological type regard the Notion, the original unity, as a mere abstraction - a possibility, an ideal, that may remain forever unrealized? If so, then the claim that the ontological type implies God's involvement in our suffering etc. has surely been trivialized. Certainly, within the ontological outlook, God's involvement in human history is redeeming, reconciling, or it is nothing! That is the great strength of the ontological type of the philosophy of religion, and that is the claim which gives it its plausibility as an interpretation of the Gospel. But then estrangement has been understood in such a way that reconciliation is built into it. This is the outlook to which Hegel gives coherent basis in his doctrine of the implicit unity of the divine and human natures. But because of this outlook, his view of reconciliation is quite "alien" to the pauline-Reformation doctrine of justification by faith through grace alone as Tillich has seen with respect to Hegel's philosophy of religion, but appears not to see with respect to the ontological type in general. This outlook also reduces the struggles and vitalities of history to a mirage, as Tillich also sees - but again only with respect to Hegel! The failure to see the issues and implications as clearly as Hegel saw them has kept Tillich from acknowledging Hegel as the summa cum laude of his class, the incontestable master of the ontological type of the philosophy of religion.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 8, 11.

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[1] Tillich, "Estrangement and Reconciliation etc." Review of Religion, IX, p. 17.

[2] Ibid., pp. 5-8.

Of course, the answer of Hegel and those who share this general outlook is that the reconciliation of man to God is only possible in terms of this "ontological" outlook. The answer is serious, and eventually we shall have to try to cope with it.

There is one assumption, however, which I must now deny: that the only alternative to the necessary immanence of God as presupposed in the hegelian (and "ontological;?) outlook is the kind of abstract transcendence which would necessarily make God and the world mutually inaccessible. The doctrine of God the Creator as I sketched it in the preceding section is opposed to such an abstract transcendence, as well as to the equally abstract and rigid immanence required by Hegel. It is also possible to speak of such a God as exercising free grace. But then, we recall, the Creator is to be distinguished from the Idea in itself: and Hegel's dialectic of alienation and reconciliation is predicated on the metaphysical primacy of the Idea, which is at the same time the implicit truth of human nature.

IV. HEGEL'S DIALECTIC OF ALIENATION AND RECONCILIATION

While I have not attempted to survey Hegel's System from top to bottom, I have nevertheless sought in these two preceding chapters to define his basic metaphysical outlook. I have treated this outlook critically, in such a way as to keep in the foreground the issues that are most decisive for my topic. Still, I have tried to present a faithful interpretation of Hegel's texts. And because Hegel is a difficult philosopher, who was at home in the most rigorous currents of Western speculation, I, at least, have found these last two chapters arduous. If they have also been tedious, the fault is mine and not Hegel's. I know that Hegel's thought is commonly said to be tedious these days, but it is hard to see how anyone sufficiently acquainted with the history of Western thought to appreciate the level on which he was working could find it so. There is not only an intellectual excitement, but a kind of beauty in Hegel's philosophical edifice, and I wish the economy of my special concern in this essay permitted me to deal with its categoreal conditions in still more detail.

At any rate, I think we are finally in a position to turn directly to Hegel's dialectic of alienation and reconciliation, with its presuppositions in mind. If I have been correct in my reading of Hegel, this dialectic receives its fundamental determination from the sovereignty of Reason (chapter 2) and its grounding in the Ideality of the first moment (chapter 3). Broadly speaking, alienation and reconciliation are the second and third moments in a dialectic which has Ideality as its first moment and therefore its defining Notion. Therefore, now that I am finally ready to come to the point, I find myself in something of the embarrassment of those novelists who trace the family ghosts for such a lot of pages and through such a lot of generations that the story itself is clearly anticipated and comes as an anticlimax. However, a procedure which is bad in a novel may not be unjustified in an essay of this sort, since the details of a philosophical system, or at least a System, do follow from its fundamental outlook. At the same time, we may find it to be as in the case of the better novels, that even one who has read the background is in for a few surprises in the actual spinning out of the plot.

i. Alienation, Positivity, and Sin

We have seen that the positing of a diverse, material world is absolutely necessary for Geist's self-actualization, but that this world is not in itself genuinely true or real.

> The Truth of the world is only its ideality, not that it [the world itself, as such] has genuine reality.[1]

This is what we have found Hegel saying everywhere. The purpose of the System, of the Logic in particular, has been to show that the Idea is the absolute definition of the Absolute. It follows from this grand conclusion that "everything actual, insofar as it is true, is the Idea, and has its truth by and in virtue of the Idea alone". Obviously, though, no single individual entity can in itself realize the universality of the Idea. Rather,

> It is only in them altogether and in their relation that the Notion is realized. The individual by itself does not correspond to its Notion. It is this limitation of its existence which constitutes the finitude and the ruin of the individual.[2]

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[1] Ph. der Religion, III-1, p. 94. See pp. 64ff.

[2] Enzyklopädie, § 213. See §§ 24, 50, 377 et passim.

This failure of an individual to conform to its Notion constitutes its estrangement in Hegel's mature thought. It is estranged in virtue of its sheer particularity, or other-being. Its Notion is the universal Idea, but it is not universal in its existence. It is an object sharply distinguished from other objects by a limited number of peculiar qualities, it has a position in space which distinguishes it from others, it exists only for a certain period of time, is limited by this period of time, and passes away. It is material, not only itself one of a many, but composed of a multiplicity of parts, capable of dissolution. In all these ways, it is clearly alienated from the absolute Idea. What is less obvious is that it is also thereby alienated from itself, since its Notion shares the universality of the Absolute, and in fact ultimately _is_ the Absolute, as the System demonstrates. We have already seen the prime illustration of this fact in connection with the implicit unity of the divine and human natures. The truth of man is Geist, i.e. God. But man in his immediate existence is not God. In his immediate existence he is therefore alienated not only from God but from his own true self - and the fact that I distinguish these two in this sentence illustrates my own alienated state! Yet, as we also saw in that connection, the individual is not simply alienated. He implicitly bears in himself the ground for his reconciliation with God - with his Notion. So there is a kind of duality within estranged existence. Its truth is contained within it as its ultimate moving principle, while yet it is alienated from its truth.

Matter, for example, is the radical other, the direct opposite of Geist. It is essentially composite, consisting of mutually exclusive parts - for which reason we should rather say that it fails to consist. In itself, as pure unformed matter, it would have no being at all, as Aristotle and his scholastic followers saw. Its reality, that is to say, is not in itself, but in its opposite, in the Idea. Mind, Soul, Geist, is its truth - which is precisely the truth that Matter has no truth. In fact, its denial is built into itself. It is real only insofar as its chaotic multiplicity is unified. Thus gravity is of its essence, drawing it into unity. In becoming real it is striving for a unity that would be destructive of itself qua matter, i.e. would realize itself as it is ideally. This ideality, the unity toward which it "strives", the realization which it "seeks", is of course Geist, which has its truth in itself and is thus the opposite of matter.[1] Thus matter, as pure potentiality, must posit its opposite in order to become actualized. No doubt this talk about matter striving and seeking and actualizing itself sounds strange. But Hegel does not mean that it does so qua matter. Pure matter as such is only a logical pole. Matter has its existence in a process the truth of which is Geist; which is to say that Geist has been implicit in it throughout. Now, there is nothing strange in talking about Geist seeking and striving; that is simply part of its "subjecthood".

Let us move to a more concrete level in the ontological order: Nature (the physical world) is not formless matter, not pure potentiality. Yet it is material, fragmented, repetitious, driven by blind necessities, and thus external and estranged, the other-being of Geist. It is not related to Geist as the Son is related to the Father. The Idea is indeed manifested in it, and is the truth of the world; the order of world-process is indeed a mirror of the divine Idea. But this means that Nature is Geist only insofar as it is in the process of being aufgehoben as Nature. Nature per se, in its immediacy and other-being, is the estrangement from Geist and therefore the unreality which is destined to pass away.[1] But Nature in its concrete truth is more than Nature as such. The ability of men to see deeper into Nature than its mere surface immediacies is indeed one of the marks of historical advance. The apprehension of "the hidden meanings of Nature" is, according to Hegel's interpretation, the great advance of the Greeks, even though they had not been able to carry this apprehension far enough. The Greeks found Geist only in Nature, and hence were limited by the standpoint of Nature, never grasped Geist in its freedom from Nature. Nevertheless, they apprehended Nature as a medium, an objective form, of Geist.[2] Hegel suggests both the advance implied in this apprehension, and its limitation, in his remark that

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[1] Ibid., §§ 389, 412, 440; Ph. der Geschichte, pp. 44-45 (Sibree Tr. p. 17).

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[1] Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 85-95. This depreciation of Nature per se should not be taken as a rejection of the quasi mystical attachment to Nature as it existed among the romantics with whom Hegel was so closely associated. When the romantics spoke of Nature they did not mean the immediate manifold of the world, but rather the One in the many, the vivifying unity, the self-identical life that throbbed through the manifold of things, apart from which the world was only a dead heap. Even if in his opinion the romantics never rose to the standpoint of rational Geist, Hegel never really lost the romantic vision. "Geist" was more than the romantics' "Nature", but the latter was woven tightly into Hegel's view of Geist.

Karl Löwith argues persuasively that Hegel and Goethe, for example, were agreed in fundamental principle. Despite differences, some real and some only semantic, both men acknowledged the kinship. After a visit from Hegel Goethe wrote in a letter to Knebel that, while Hegel's printed works appear "unclear and abstruse" to him, yet in intimate conversation he becomes aware of being "in agreement with him in fundamental idea and conviction". There are of course differences implied in the fact that Goethe understood the unity of things in terms of Nature, while Hegel understood it in terms of historical Geist, but the affinities between their respective understanding of these terms was strong. Von Hegel zu Nietzsche, pp. 17-28.

[2] Ph. der Geschichte, III, pp. 570-575 (Sibree Tr., pp. 238-240).

> We could call the Greek Geist the plastic artist, which converts the natural into an expression of Geist, forms a picture out of a stone . . . [1]

The Greek is beyond merely looking at the stone, or sitting on it, but has not yet thrown the stone away altogether. Such an advance is not merely a progress in "knowledge", in any sense which would distinguish knowledge from the state of being. Knowledge is on the contrary the prime metaphysical-historical determinant. The recognition by man, a creature within the natural world, of the spiritual character of Nature itself is an advance in the actualization of the ideality which is the truth of things. It is the means by which the implicit ideality becomes explicit, in Actuality. But what is overcome is the immediacy, the mere given otherness, the division, the multiplicity, the externality, the materiality of Nature. This immediate, particular aspect of Nature is its deadness. Particularity, externality to Geist, is alienation. It is also finitude; objects that are only externally related to one another lack the infinitude of self-reflection. Finitude, then, by definition, is alienation from Geist, and thus self-alienation.

Now we pass from Nature to what from our prejudiced standpoint seems the most interesting creature in Nature: Man, of course, is finite, at least insofar as "man" stands for the manifold company of men, in their many-ness. As a natural object a man is limited by other natural objects to which he is related only externally. Thus his view of things is one-sided. What he sees, what he desires, the conditions of his action are all limited by the particularity of his position in space and in time. This limitation of cognitive and moral perspective is what is usually indicated by speaking of him as self-centered. This limitation by his particular standpoint in space and time, as one object among others, thus sets him in opposition to the universal. The "self" in which he is thus "centered" is not his true, absolute self, but his "natural" self which is opposed to the universality of his true self. As a "natural" being he is in fact inevitably centered in this natural self, and insofar as he is so oriented he cannot, for example, grasp the moral universality of Kant's categorical imperative. In this respect Hegel follows Kant in seeing this failure as the basic determination of man as a sinner, as evil. It is man's sin to be a merely "natural man" in this sense. His opposition to the universal is not only his opposition to God, but to the other men; since it is inherent in his very situation as separate from others in time and space that his interests should conflict with theirs.

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[1] Ibid., III, p. 571 (Sibree Tr., p. 239).

Yet, of course, the kind of teleological movement we have found in matter and in Nature is found in preeminent degree in man. Man is after all distinguished from other finite objects in Nature, in that he is aware of his finitude, and chafes under the limitations which it imposes. Moreover, in this awareness of his finitude is implied consciousness of the infinite to which his natural being is opposed; finitude being a correlative term, one is aware of it as limitation only when one is also aware of the infinite in which there is no such limitation. So man becomes related to the infinite in reverence and worship, related to it even though he is still in opposition to it in virtue of his finitude. But the very possibility of such relationality, the very capacity to recognize his finitude as such, is already a transcendence of mere finitude, a transcendence of himself as merely finite.

> The finite is therefore posited against the infinite as the negative, and at the same time as that which is for-itself (das Fürsichseiende); so the finite in its being-for-itself is itself the transcendence (Aufgehobenheit) of its contradiction, and so the being-for-itself exists in itself only as the transcending of itself and the striving for the infinite. But this striving is at the same time posited as unattainable; for the Ego in its finitude is at once that which must be undergone and is the finitude which, posited as the fixed and absolute, must be abandoned, in order that the infinite can be attained.[1]

It is in this complex sense that man's consciousness must be at once finite and at the same time, as we have seen, in identity with the divine. This duality within man is necessary if Geist is to come to concreteness. If finitude were not "undergone", Geist would remain only abstract idea; it becomes concrete only insofar as it emerges, or finds itself, in the finite consciousness. Yet the capacity for self-transcendence must be built into the finite, or Geist - far from finding itself in the finite - would be lost in the other-being of finitude. No, human consciousness must be the material in which the divine Geist is realized; Geist cannot come to rest in its mere Notion, but must pass through the successive "steps" in which it is realized. These "steps", imperfect as they are in their finitude, constitute both God's self-fulfillment and God's self-disclosure; or speaking humanly, they constitute the history of the religions.[2] So the finite subject in his very finitude plays an essential role, since the finite is an

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1. _Ph. der Religion_, I, p. 122; see pp. 119-122. I have made bold to translate this untranslatable passage only because it is as impossible in German as it is in English. The thing that makes such passages so tortured, however, is that Hegel is himself trying to "attain the absolute", in the sense of saying everything at once. But for this very reason such passages can be very illuminating, difficult as they are, and can convey more of what he is driving at than those selections which manage to be simpler only by being one-sided.

2. _Ibid._, I, pp. 71-72; see pp. 66ff. for a useful summary of the chief "moments" of religion.

indispensable element in the infinite.

> The worldly in general is not left in its immediate, natural character, but is seen to be in itself the special, namely the universal, intellectual world, which has its root, its truth in God. . . . man possesses the determination and attributes of God as the first begotten son, Adam Kadmon, the first man; we may call this unity the implicit unity, the concrete Idea, which, however, is still only implicit.[1]

The last observation brings us back again to the doctrine of the implicit unity of God and man, which I hope has by now been sufficiently discussed. Therefore let us subject the other side of man's duality to more careful scrutiny.

The individual qua finite, particular, is in the first place the unreal, in the sense that should by now be evident. He is the unliving, the weak, the impotent, the Nothingness or Nihil (Nichtige)[2] which is being overcome by Geist. Even though this individual may be related to God in reverence, and is blessed thereby, he is nevertheless not yet concrete, not yet actual.[3] Hegel is fond of claiming that there is a kind of empirical justification for this doctrine of the unreality of the empirical world: finite objects demonstrate their own instability, their unreality, the tenuousness of their hold on existence, by - passing away. Thus mortality attaches to all finite objects insofar as they are finite, which is to say that mortality is the result of alienation: "The wages of sin is death"![1]

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[1] Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie, III (Jubiläum Ausgabe), pp. 101-102 (Haldane Tr., III, p. 3). This passage and others cited in my discussion of the dual nature of man are interpreted in the light of Hegel's important chapter on Natural Man, Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 95-121.

[2] Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 6n, 173 et passim. It may not be only an accident that Karl Barth, in the Kirchliche Dogmatik, uses the expression "Nichtige" in the same way to characterize the sin of the world which is overcome by grace. Hegel certainly makes it evident how much the doctrine depends on a fundamentally idealistic conception. That sin, that opposition to God, despite its only too palpable presence in the world, is nevertheless unreal, is a doctrine which belongs to absolute idealism, ancient and modern. The success of Barth's effort to extricate it from this context must necessarily be problematic.

[3] Ibid., p. 74.

Yes, the wages of sin, for sin is precisely alienation. It is the separation of man from God, it is his affirmation of himself in his separateness from God (i.e. the affirmation of God's negation), hence the affirmation of the external and the unliving. It is in fact the negation of his own true self, his Notion. Evil, sin, is the "not-self" which is involved in the movement of the self (Geist) into particularity, and is thus the external, the accidental, the unessential. "Natural" man, man qua finite, then, is the sinner. Sin is thus inevitable, as we shall see in a moment in discussing Hegel's view of the Fall. Men are involved in sin in virtue of their finite situation. But they are personally guilty of their sin, responsible for their sin, only if they remain fixed in the standpoint of finitude, of separation from Geist. Thus again we see the "dynamic" character of Hegel's understanding of the human situation. What man is in his basic determination is not a static quality attaching to him at some moment, but the direction of his becomingness. Thus, speaking more precisely, Hegel says that the merely natural will, the will to separation and particularity, is the evil determination in man. In apparent contradiction to the Kantian perspective that knowledge is the finite element in man, and will the infinite, Hegel affirms the infinitude of knowledge, the finitude of will. Actually this distinction is somewhat semantic, since for Kant will is only potentially infinite, only the good will actually transcends the boundaries of finitude; and for Hegel knowledge is only potentially infinite, and - as Kant would agree - the will is finite only in its affirmation of the limited moral perspective of man in his particularistic opposition to the universal. It is in this sense that "will" is the primary determination of "natural man", and is by nature evil. This is only another way of saying that sin is self-centeredness, in the sense already explained. To put it still another way, sin is inadequacy, the failure to realize the Notion. In this sense does Hegel understand the Gospel paradox that he who tries to save his life (his finite self, over against other selves and over against God) shall lose his life (his true self), and he who loses his life shall find it. One receives his true self only through "self"-sacrifice.[1] And only in affirming this true self, which is forgetfulness of the merely finite self, can a man escape the threat, the mortality, the destructiveness of the finite, and the hostility of a finite world. For death, and the hostility of Nature which punishes man for his sin, are conditions attaching to his finite self.

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[1] Immortality, of course, is a present quality, the possession of Geist, Reason. Obviously it cannot be the continuation of a distinct quasi-existence after death, since the everlasting continuation of finitude is still finite, i.e. a bad infinite. Immortality is rather the possession of the true infinite of self-reflection, i.e. is of the essential character of Geist. The estrangement of finitude is obviously, then, characterized by mortality. Ibid., I, pp. 162-234; III-1, 110-111, 123, 129, 178; Enzyk. §§ 221-222, 251 et passim.

Indeed, in this estranged state the social, economic, cultural, political life of man is also estranged from him. We have seen the development of this theme in Hegel's thought during the early years, and it continued to be prominent in his mature work. It would not be to our purpose to go into detail in expounding this rich aspect of Hegel's doctrine of estrangement, and anyway it has probably received more attention than anything else in recent Hegel scholarship, particularly among scholars interested in Hegel's relation to Marx. But we must note that in Hegel's mature work this theme is developed in quite direct relation to his fundamentally theological understanding of the estrangement of man from Geist and from himself. The importance of this theological basis of the doctrine is not always acknowledged, even by otherwise very astute interpreters. Man is estranged from the works of his own hands and mind because he has become centered in himself qua particular, estranged. His will is the will to separation, centered in his own private desires, and therefore he is placed in opposition to society as well as to nature, because society and its works are external to him in his particularity. His politics, his economics, then become the battle-field for a war of each against all. Thus for example the work of his hands is not really appropriated by him, does not become an extension of his own will except in a very limited way, and he is therefore not free in its use. On the contrary it becomes another finite object set over against him, limiting him, and hence is actually a denial of his freedom. And the socio-economic machinery of his civilization, instead of serving man's own true development, becomes independent of his interests as an individual - indeed becomes his master instead of his servant. Again, the state is only very superficially his own. At worst it becomes the agency for executing the will of only a single man (in the Orient) or of the few (in Greece and Rome) - and of these only within stringent limitations - while the great mass of men are simply used, quite contrary to their own interests and desires.

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[1] Ph. der Religion, I, pp. 162, 257-259, 275f; III-1, pp. 96-97, 102ff, 205-206, et passim.

Even when the state is not positively tyrannical, even when it exists apparently by the consent of the people and in defense of their collective interests, still it is embodied in laws and institutions which inhibit each man's pursuit of his own will. In the best state there is a conformity of law to the demands of Reason, with a minimum of "positive", merely arbitrary and accidental, injunctions.[1] But even in such a state a man is estranged if he has not yet attained the standpoint of Reason, and still is led by the particularistic "natural" will. In this case, there is "substantial" freedom - the society is required by law to operate in accordance with Reason, is hence "objectively" or "substantially" free - but not yet "subjective" freedom, the conformity of the will to Reason. Laws are then "something fixed and abstract, to which the subject holds himself in absolute servitude" and the subjects themselves "are like children, who obey their parents without will or insight of their own."[2] True Freedom, of course, comes when subjective and substantial freedom are reconciled, which can occur only when state and individual have both attained the standpoint of Reason. Until this point is reached, there is estrangement of man from the state, the state is not his own, he is not "at home" in it.[3]

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[1] There is always, of course, a positive element in Law, e.g. the manner in which taxes are to be paid, whether annually or triannually etc. But in the well-constituted state such contingent features are ephemeral. The basis of the law has rather the necessity attaching to Reason. If it has not such necessity, if the basis of the law is merely contingent, founded upon an arbitrary will, then the state is itself estranged. See Enzyklopädie, §§ 529-532.

[2] Ph. der Geschichte, p. 150 (Sibree Tr., p. 104).

[3] The theme of estrangement in politics, economics, culture, etc. is developed in detail, of course, throughout the Ph. der Geschichte and the Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts.

Since the progressive realization of Freedom (or of Reason or Geist - it is all the same) supplies the basis of the philosophy of history, the extent to which people are thus estranged or reconciled determines their place in history. For reconciliation in history is gradual, admitting of stages. The result is that among peoples who live almost entirely in immediacy, in which the standpoint of Reason is almost entirely implicit, not yet explicit, there really is no history. Thus great portions of the world are simply left out of "history", not in the merely formal sense that we do not have data about their past, but in the essential sense that Geist has not noticeably had anything to do with them![1] What this signifies is that such people live in the most woeful self-estrangement. There one sees the "natural condition" of man, and it is pretty dreadful. Hegel mentions for example several instances of the savage way of life in Africa, which is one of these (literally) God-forsaken territories, as evidence to support his claim that the "natural condition" of man is "one of absolute and thorough injustice" - which claim has already been deduced from the Idea.[2] A people only becomes world-historical when it contributes a genuine advance in the progressive development of Freedom in history. However, having made its advance, if it does not keep pace with the further advance of Geist it endures a fate similar to that of the unhappily situated people who are not included at all: it drops out of "history".[3]

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1. Ph. der Geschichte, I, pp. 121ff (Sibree Tr. pp. 80ff).

2. Ibid., p. 144 (Sibree Tr. pp. 98-99).

3. This has happened, for example, to China and India, to the Greeks, and to the Roman Catholics. See ibid., II, pp. 511f, III, 657-658, IV, p. 885 (Sibree tr. pp. 221-222, 276-277, 419).

Conversely, there are some peoples who have not yet been world-historical who may well be so in the future - a consideration which has been overlooked in the silly but popular interpretation that Hegel thought history had ended with his generation of Europeans..(See § iv below.)

To round out this little survey illustrating Hegel's view of estrangement it is most essential for our purpose to discuss man's self-estrangement in his religion. This subject belongs to the problem of "positive religion" which we already encountered in the early writings. However, to avoid undue repetition I shall consider this aspect of man's estrangement in relation to Hegel's use of the Gospel, in the next chapter. We already have enough illustrations before us to make a few comments on Hegel's view of estrangement.

The paradoxical feature of all these reflections about Nature, Man, and History is that there are clearly recognizable existences, indeed whole continents full of people, whose actuality is highly problematic. However, even if one has not yet grown grizzled and hunchbacked poring over the writings of the wise, merely a few years of diligent pedantry in the history of thought are enough to remind one that this paradox has plenty of precedents and some weighty grounds. If one is convinced that there is an eternal source from which all things spring, or an eternal ground which expresses itself by a diremption into the passing flux of things, can one say that the ephemeral droplets of existence which no sooner appear than they are lost occupy an ontological status precisely the equal of their eternal ground? Or if one is a Christian believer, can he regard God as merely a being among others? Or can he suppose that sin has the same power as God's grace, capable of standing forever against God's will to salvation?

or that God's sending of the Son in the fulness of time is "real" only in the same sense that every other event in the history of the world is real? To be sure, the many-toned clatter and bang that one hears, the wave of variated objects that one sees, have a primitive power over the mind; it comes as a shock to hear that they are not fully "actual". But one who wishes to get to the bottom of things will not therefore immediately join the great masses who make merry over the stupidity of the wise and fabribricate stories about the philosopher falling in a well while looking at the stars.

For Hegel, however, the systematic expression for this relative unreality of things is "estrangement". The reality of the positive as such, the merely given, is problematic because it is an estranged existence. But it is evident that "estrangement" is a loaded term. That the immediate entities of the world are particulars, limited by one another and pursuing careers peculiar to themselves, is not merely a conclusion of speculative philosophy. It is a datum, known even by the fabled man in the street; but he does not know that they are "estranged". To say that there is misery, unfulfilled longing, is a judgment of much the same sort, though the data are psychological. To say that certain things or acts are morally bad is a more complicated judgment, though at a minimum it may mean only that they do not correspond to the heart's desires. But when a philosopher says that this natural world as such is estranged, quite another kind of judgment is involved, a metaphysical judgment. Implied in this judgment is the claim that there is a true essence of things, to which the natural world does not entirely conform. The view which the philosopher holds of this true essence will determine the verdict which he passes on the empirical world.

For Hegel the truth is the Idea, and therefore the world is estranged to the extent that it does not adequately express the Idea. The content of this correlative term, "estrangement", is determined by the view of the essential truth. Hegel's idealism does not consist in the crude claim that each existing thing is of the nature of idea; Hegel recognizes the existence of a material universe. His idealism rather consists in the judgment that the first and decisive moment in the dialectic is the moment of Idea; that to be existent is therefore not the same as being in the truth; that in fact an existence is estranged insofar as the Idea is not being actualized in it. If one conceives of reality as dialectical, but conceives this dialectic in such a way that the first, definitive moment is not the Idea, then quite different conclusions will result concerning that which constitutes estrangement (as we shall see in our discussion of Feuerbach and Marx). Two basic questions then arise: Can anything but the Idea legitimately constitute the first moment of a dialectic of reality? The second question is even more basic: Is reality in fact constituted by a necessary dialectic of alienation and reconciliation at all? We shall return to these questions.

But now let us make a few final comments on Hegel's doctrine of alienation. Merely natural objects, particulars as such, people living in self-centered particularity or in a particularity centered in some limited group or value, nations that are not world-historical etc. etc. - Hegel knows perfectly well that all these exist, and may be having quite a jolly time for themselves. Yet he denies that this sheer mass of things and people as such is to be given ultimate authority in the determination of the real; he denies it in the name of Reason and in the name of Christian wisdom. Things are real only insofar as they are rational. But Reason is not merely an unchanging form; it is Geist fulfilling itself in its other in history. Something is real only in the extent to which it expresses a necessary moment in the dialectical movement of this historical Geist - i.e. only in the extent of its relative adequacy to the Idea. Negatively stated, a thing is unreal insofar as it is merely positive, insofar as it merely is without having necessarily to be, insofar as it is a matter of indifference in Geist's progressive self-realization whether this thing exists or not. There are therefore many levels of reality, not merely in a timeless hierarchy of being but as stages in an historical movement. The task of the System is to discover the level on which a category or form of being has its ontological significance, as a relatively more or less adequate definition of the Absolute. The task of the philosophy of history or the philosophy of religion, for example, is to show the necessary movements by which the absolute reconciliation was reached. Something may therefore be real enough in relation to one level, but have no significance, no reality, on another. A people, for example, may have no world-historical significance, yet exist on a much higher level of spirituality than the meaningless repetitions which characterize Nature. Nor is Nature itself a pure blank; it is of course the necessary presupposition of History, is indeed implicitly Geist. But Geist has not become conscious of itself in Nature as such. It is Nature's destiny to be aufgehoben qua pure Nature, and to become assimulated to the use of those in whom Geist has become more conscious of itself. Thus while the positive as such is the unreal, it is too simple to say that anything infected with positivity is simply unreal. The situation is more complicated, because something which is indeed positive is yet implicitly Geist and is in fact involved at some level in the implicit-becoming-explicit life of Geist.

The point may be clarified by the consideration that matter has not only no reality, but no existence as such. Matter is in this sense the extreme of unreality. It is not in itself the positive, the particular, but is so to say the outer limit of the particular, or the outer darkness which threatens the positive with utter dissolution. Insofar as something is positive, is mere self-centered particularity, it is set in opposition to Geist, estranged from Geist, and as such would pass away. But it is part of Hegel's "advance" to show that the positive is not permitted to stand as such, that there is a redeeming principle logically inherent in positivity itself.

Again, to state the case in still another way: When one reads Hegel's frequent statements that the merely existent as such has no reality, one is inclined to suspect that he has fallen into the inadvertent dualism which vitiates so many supposedly monistic systems. Something exists, but is simply left to stand outside what is called "reality". But then it is simply a reality of another order, left unrelated to the "reality" in which the philosopher is interested. But the secret of Hegel's dialectic is that the positive existent, which is not as such real, is not left standing outside the reality. The analysis of the estranged positivity itself reveals the reality - Geist - as its logical result and inner truth. Let us now see how this happens.

ii. Through Alienation to Reconciliation

In Hegel's Logic the "positive" is treated in the doctrine of Essence, under the categories of Difference and Contradiction. The Categories of Reflection (Essentiality) embrace the triad Identity, Difference (including Diversity and Opposition) and Contradiction, and are then aufgehoben in the Ground. In such a scheme, we should expect that the positive would be treated where it is, characterizing the Idea's movement out of an abstract Identity. Indeed, although it is a movement within Essentiality, it is the movement into the unessential which (throughout the doctrine of Essence) the essential contains within itself as its own self-reflection. The positive emerges with the fragmenting of the essential identity into a plurality, a diversity. The positive is the simple self-relation or identity with itself of each isolated fragment of this diversity. It is the aspect in which a thing simply is what it is in isolation, unrelated to anything else, its essential identity with the whole broken by its simple identity with itself as such. But this simple identity with itself implies its unlikeness to another, so that in affirming itself it negates its other; i.e. positivity as such implies negativity. To be isolated, independent, is as such to negate and be negated. Diversity passes into opposition when it becomes clear that each side becomes determinate only by its opposition to the other; Difference is implicitly Contradiction, because A=A only insofar as A implies non-A. This Contradiction is already contained in the positive as such, but only implicitly. It is explicit in the negative, since the independence, the simple self-likeness of the positive is aufgehoben in the consideration that to be posited is as such to be negated. But since in the Contradiction the positive is seen to imply the negative, i.e. the positive and the negative are seen to be the same, the Contradiction is itself aufgehoben in the Ground, which is again an identity, but now more concrete than the abstract Identity with which we began. For the maxim, that everything has its sufficient Ground, makes explicit what is implicit in the sameness of the positive and the negative, i.e. that nothing is simply positive or simply negative, but everything has its being in another.[1]

Now, having been instructed by these considerations from the doctrine of Essence, let us return from this abstract realm to the theater of World-history. We have seen that the positivity of things as merely given, their mutually limiting plurality, constitutes their estrangement from the Idea. The very positivity of a particular existent, that is, is negative in the light of the Notion. Not only does the positive negate the Notion, but as we have just seen the positive is self-negating, self-estranged, since each positive term is set over against others. And since it is the task of Geist to overcome the estrangement of existence, this dead negativity which characterizes the positive must itself be negated. But this negation of the negation cannot be simply a return to the standpoint of the Notion; it must be a reconciliation of the Notion with the positive other in which it has been negated. Hegel does not advocate a simple idealism of the first moment, that the Notion as such is the final truth. The universal Notion must become concrete by its movement into its other, its diremption into the plurality of particulars, and its recovery of itself in this other. But the Notion and its positive other are not simply "synthesized"; the dialectic is asymmetrical, as I have pointed out: Although the second moment is not simply cancelled out, it is the first moment which supplies the ground for the reconciliation.

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[1] Wissenschaft der Logik, II, pp. 40-63; see also Enzyklopädie §§ 115-121.

Yet the positivity of mere existence as such must be internally negated, must include its negation as a principle inherent in itself qua positive. We have seen that this is in principle the case, in the considerations introduced above from the Logic. But what is the negativity which is the medium of Geist's self-actualization, which makes use of the negativity already implicit in every positive existent?

In a famous passage in the introduction to the Philosophy of History, Hegel explains that time and thought constitute the decisive negativity of existence. "Time is the negative element in the sensuous world." This principle reminds us again that Hegel's is a heraclitian world. Every special "form of Geist" - not only every thing, but the spirit of every age - passes away by the sheer fact that the existing world is a world of change. Positive elements not only negate one another in the sense of mutually limiting one another in space, but also in the sense of superceding one another in time. The passing of time negates every finite form, every existence. But the negativity of time is after all only relative, incomplete. One limited, particular form only gives way, in time, to another form just as limited. Thought, on the contrary "is the same negativity, but the most inward, the infinite form itself, in which therefore all existents in general are dissolved".[1] Thought is the medium which not only grasps the Geist of each successive age, but can grasp also the unlimited universality of Geist itself. Geist, of course, is not unlimited in the sense of being merely abstract and indefinite; its infinitude is realized in self-reflection, precisely in thought, Geist in the other thinking itself. Thought, therefore, is capable not only of grasping each limited content and transcending it, but is capable of transcending every limited content, of transcending limitation in general. This is of course the business of Philosophy, which negates absolutely every existent and finally has only Geist for its object. But precisely in this negation nothing is lost. Geist fulfills the true purpose and interest of every age, even while it is an eternal present which "now is what it always was". Geist is

> now merely the richer consciousness, the Notion elaborated deeper into its own self. Geist has all the steps of the past still in it, . . . Philosophy has to do with the present, the real. The moments which Geist appears to have left behind it are also contained in its present depths. Just as it has proceeded through its moments in history, so it has to proceed through them in the present - in the Notion of itself.[2]

The negativity of time is not simply blind supercession of one situation by another. Its internal, essential principle is Geist. But thought, in its authentic activity, is Absolute Knowledge which not only has Geist for its object but transcends the distinction between subject and object, since it is Geist knowing itself. Thought is fulfilled in Philosophy, in this case the philosophy of history, in which is contained the intelligible truth in the apparently blind negativity of time. The apparent mystery, opacity, positivity, of the progression of events is now transparent to thought. That is to say, the apparent arbitrariness of the merely given fact is now seen to be in its truth a manifestation of the universal, not only graspable in thought, but ultimately of the nature of thought. This is what it means for thought to be the infinite form of the negativity, in which all existents qua finite, positive, given, are dissolved. The dissolution of the opacity of existence is the condition of reconciliation, for reconciliation is Geist's self-consciousness in its other - i.e., practically, in thinking man.

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, I, pp. 178-179 (Sibree Tr., p. 77). The sentences quoted appear in substantially the same form in the old edition, edited by Hegel's son Karl, and in the new critical edition edited by Hoffmeister, cited here. But the explication is altogether different in the two editions. If we accept the Hoffmeister edition as normative, then the older text, on which both the Jubiläums-Ausgabe of 1928 and the English translation by J. Sibree are based, is especially corrupt and misleading at this point. See also Enzyklopädie § 258.

[2] Ibid., I, p. 183. §Not in the older edition, or the English translation based on it.)

Therefore if the negativity inherent in every positive element is to issue in the reconciliation of Geist with its other, this negativity must express itself in its most decisive form in the historical development of man's consciousness. It is evident, categoreally, in every triad in the System, how the second moment - the moment of estrangement - must be posited by, and therefore implicitly contain, the ground of its negation into a more reconciled form. But everything depends upon Hegel's showing how this movement from estrangement to reconciliation is necessitated in particular by the conditions inherent within man's estranged existence. Therefore, in his various treatments of alienated man, Hegel must consistently show how this disruption in man's existence is itself the driving force which elevates his consciousness to the final reconciliation. In other words, the dialectic of alienation and reconciliation must be exhibited in its existential dimensions in human life.

At every stage of history, for example, the historical epoch develops logical contradictions within itself, which eventually lead to an actual historical disruption in society and in the life of the people living in it. Of course the people involved do what they do for narrow, proximate reasons of their own. They do not intend to bring about the disruptions which are necessary for the movement to a new epoch; they may indeed be entirely blind to the real purposes being accomplished world-historically in what they do. The "cunning of Reason" may make them unwitting and unwilling participants. Of course, "world-historical individuals" are generally men of vision, who have some consciousness of what is required for the age; yet the aims of the World-Geist which is at work in them can only be obscurely grasped at best.[1] But even though people are more or less unconscious of these ultimate purposes, they become painfully conscious of the disruptions which are necessary for their accomplishment. The inherent rending asunder of the spirit of an age as it moves to a new epoch produces existential rending in the life of its people. The comparative calm which reigns in the civilization before the contradictions in its spirit become explicit gives way, when these contradictions do become explicit, to personal anxiety, agony, unhappiness. A person is "happy" when the conditions of his age more or less correspond to the desires of his own one-sided particularity - which itself reflects the one-sided spirit of the age. But such peace, such self-contentment, runs counter to the advance demanded by the dialectic of history. The disruption of such self-contentment, such happiness, is the condition for the advance. World-history

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[1] Ibid., I, pp. 97-99 (Sibree Tr., pp. 29-33).

> is not the arena of happiness. The times of happiness are the empty pages in it. There is indeed a satisfaction in World-history, but it is not that which is called happiness: for it is the satisfaction of such purposes which stand over the particular interests.[1]

Thus not only the objective historical category of estrangement, but the existential pain of human life disrupted within itself is given an affirmative interpretation in Hegel's philosophy of history. It is the means for the self-unfolding of Spirit from mere implicit freedom to explicit freedom, reconciliation. The development from potentiality to actuality, which in natural objects without wills of their own is a harmonious unfolding, is in the realm of Geist "a hard, unending battle" of Geist with itself.

> What Geist desires is to attain its own Notion; but it conceals this goal from itself, is proud and full of delight in this alienation from itself.[2]

This estrangement at every step in the world-historical advance is brought to a decisive, white-hot point of disintegration with the full attainment of individual self-consciousness. The movement to reconciliation is not accomplished by a gradual relaxation of the tensions of estrangement. Quite the contrary, it strains these tensions to the breaking-point. When, after the toil and pain of ages, man becomes aware of the duality between the eternal and the temporal, the unchanging and the changing, the essential and the accidental, the universal and the particular, the unlimited and the limited - he has reached at once the decisive point in his development as man, and also the most terrible abyss of misery. In the _Phenomenologie_ des Geistes this duality emerges at the stage of the "unhappy consciousness". The consciousness is unhappy because it contains this duality as a simple contradiction; thus the one consciousness is divided, self-contradictory, containing unreconciled an absolute Notion and a feeble and shifting existence. Hence if it, seeking at least some unity as a self, identifies itself as the changing, the limited, the unessential and finds the absolute Notion radically outside itself - i.e. the religious experience in which man stands as an empty and worm-like creature over against the Almighty - the self is involved in a hopeless struggle to recover its true essence, to overcome its emptiness of significance. If on the other hand it somehow elevates itself to the standpoint of the unchangeable (presumably in mystical experience) then again it is conscious of having chosen one alternative over against another - an infinite over against a finite, which is therefore limited by the finite: the abstract unlimited is hence limited, i.e. is a bad infinite, again a self-contradiction. In either case consciousness is agonizingly divided against itself.[1] The reconciliation of this breach is only a yearning, a hope, since it does not yet possess the consciousness that selfhood as such, and its own selfhood, is precisely the Absolute in the essential form of individuality. Yet this torn consciousness is a necessary stage in the reconciliation.

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[1] _Ibid._, I, pp. 92-93. Cf. the variant rendering of this passage in the Jubeläum Ausgabe, pp. 55-56 (Sibree Tr., pp. 26-27).

[2] _Ibid._, pp. 151-152 (Eng. p. 55).

> Its true return into itself, however, or its reconciliation with itself, will display the Notion of Geist becoming alive and passing into existence, because it already implicitly involves the fact that as a single undivided consciousness it is a duality: it itself is the beholding of one self-consciousness in another, and it itself is both, and the unity of both is already its own essence.[2]

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[1] Phenomenologie des Geistes, pp. 158-171 (Baillie Tr., 253-267).

[2] Ibid., p. 159 (Baillie Tr., 251). See pp. 533-534 (Baillie Tr., 765-766), where the unhappy consciousness is associated with the believing consciousness in this same relationship to the reconciled consciousness.

The concrete universality of the one in the many, the universal in the particular, is won only at the cost of the pain of the unhappy consciousness, divided against itself.

This unhappy consciousness is an intrinsic stage especially within the advance of the religious consciousness. Hegel's view of the unhappy consciousness is probably a reflection on Medieval Christianity in particular, in which man is set radically over against the divine majesty. Without using the term, "unhappy consciousness", Hegel introduces the same sort of reflection in his treatment of Medieval Christianity in his Philosophy of History.[1] In fact, the very significant treatment of good and evil in the lectures on the philosophy of religion[2] turns on the same basic analysis of man's consciousness of his situation before God. Man is by nature - i.e. in his immediate nature - particular, limited, therefore evil, in the sense discussed in the last section. But he is (as we have also seen) universal, spiritual, "the image of God", indeed identical with Geist, good - in his Notion. He becomes conscious of this duality in the consciousness of himself as an individual before God, set in opposition to God. Again there is the pain of a double estrangement. He cannot accept the divine nature as his own, since the implicit unity of divine and human Geist is known to him only after it becomes explicit in the actual reconciliation; but yet his longing for the divine prevents him from accepting the world and his limited nature which is part of it, as his own. His merely natural will is at war with his essential nature, his individual, subjective self is at war with the objectivity of "the pure Ego" - though his consciousness of the essential nature or pure Ego is itself of course an estranged consciousness; he knows his true self only in the thought of God.

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, IV, pp. 408ff (Sibree Tr., pp. 366ff). See also Hegel's History of Philosophy, Haldane Tr., III, pp. 45-58.

[2] Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 102-121.

> The consciousness of this opposition, this separation of the Ego and the natural will, this consciousness is the one infinite contradiction. The Ego is with the natural will, with the world, in immediate relationship, and at the same time is repelled from it. This is the infinite pain, the suffering of the world.[1]

The infinite contradiction is a necessary moment in the infinite self-reflection of Geist. It is in fact the moment of consciousness, consciousness of the self in its basic tension, or the moment of genuine knowledge in one sense (though of course not yet absolute Knowledge). One has no longer the naive unity of "innocence" in which one lives in an immediate self-contentment because one is not aware of the opposition of universal and particular, good and evil. Now one knows the distinction, knows one's self as a natural finite will set over against the infinite. Now one is conscious of himself as a self. But this achievement is also the will to separation, which is the evil of man and his pain. One no longer simply is what he is; he is conscious of being what he ought not to be. This consciousness, as consciousness of his particularity, his assertion of his separated self over against the universal, is itself the evil. "It is therefore not that the reflection has an external relationship to evil, but reflection, knowledge is itself evil."[2]

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[1] Ph. der Religion, III-1, p. 112.

[2] Ibid., pp. 109-110. This view of "knowledge" does not really contradict the doctrine that will is finite, knowledge infinite. For this knowledge, in which is posited the distinction between finite and infinite, is the basis of the natural "will" as such, the will to separation. It is at the same time the presupposition of that absolute Knowledge which is properly infinite. See p. 105 for a clarification from Hegel's own manuscript.

Knowledge is evil because in it subject is set over against object, as members of a plurality which is opposed to the universal.

At the same time, knowledge, consciousness - and the separation it presupposes - is precisely the necessary condition for reconciliation. The essential principle of reconciliation is thus built into the point of deepest estrangement, the "infinite contradiction". This cleavage, this knowledge is indeed the furthest extension of the movement of Geist outside itself.

> But in knowledge there lies just as much the divine principle of turning, the return into itself; it inflicts the wound and heals it, (because) the principle is Geist and truth.[1]

This rending asunder in consciousness is an essential moment in the infinite freedom of Geist, and for this reason it is both "the source of evil", "the poisoned goblet out of which man drinks death and decay" and at the same time "the point where reconciliation has its ultimate source". Hegel adds a significant proposition: "For to posit itself as evil is in itself the Aufhebung of evil."[2] This proposition belongs to the very core of hegelian idealism. There is a simple sense in which the proposition is obviously true: Evil is a correlative term; to know, as a judgment of consciousness, that something is evil presupposes the knowledge of a good in some sense, a good violated or not attained. So far, the proposition is tautological. But it does not follow that an actual evil is as such inherently aufgehoben in an actual good - it does not follow, unless

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1. Ibid., p. 105. From Hegel's own manuscript.

2. Ibid., p. 110.

categories of consciousness are made the ultimate ontological categories of reality. But this is what Hegel has done; that is what it means to have a philosophy of Geist. Consciousness is the immanent movement of Geist in the world and in history, and therefore embodies the real movement of reality.

In this dialectical context, then, to affirm the estrangement, the evil, of the datum is already to know the true essence or the good. And since it is the non-ideal which is evil and therefore the ideal which is good or true, and since the relation to an Idea is a relationship of knowledge, therefore to know the good, the true, the Idea, is already to realize it. Of course this knowledge is not the knowledge of a disembodied mind; Hegel's idealism is not of that sort. It is the knowledge of a corporeal, finite being, of a whole person; i.e. it is a knowledge embodied in the estranged other itself! To know one's self, qua finite as estranged and evil per se is hence to know the good and the true as ideality, is hence to have accomplished the realization of the ideal in a natural, corporeal self. Therefore "to posit itself as evil is in itself the Aufhebung of evil!" This point is of the utmost importance for our purpose, because it reveals the kind of idealism that lies at the heart of the hegelian dialectic of alienation and reconciliation.

The point that the healing is built into the wound receives its most colorful treatment in Hegel's discussion of the Christian dogma of the Fall. His interpretation of the Fall has been highly influential in Protestant theology. Even today one finds philosophers and theologians spinning out variations on the still recognizably Hegelian theme - often apparently without realizing how deeply embedded it is, inherently, in Hegel's kind of idealism. Hegel himself was very pleased with his treatment of the Fall, unpacked it at every opportunity with remarkable consistency of expression.[1] The very fact that he repeated it so often suggests that Hegel considered it an especially illuminating route into his point of view. Furthermore, he likes to refer to it as a good example of how mythopoetic representations contain conceptual truth - though of course it takes an expositor schooled in the concept to lift out the conceptual truth. The interpretation proceeds along the lines which I have already drawn. Adam, of course, is a representation of man in general. The life in paradise is the immediate self-contentment of man who lives in unreflective harmony with the universal, the life of innocence which has received no distinctive self-consciousness. The life of the original pair is not so much a virtuous life as an innocence which knows not good or evil. The Fall from this state, however, is not an accident which results from an enticement from outside man (the serpent). It is on the contrary the step into opposition which necessarily occurs in every son of Adam, because it is grounded in the nature of man: it is the step into self-consciousness. It always pleased Hegel to defend some traditional doctrine which Enlightenment rationality had loftily denounced as offensive, degrading and superstitious. So now he is again in a position to expose the simple-mindedness and brittleness of the position of the abstract understanding in its attacks on the doctrine of original sin. Hegel sees, as most of his predecessors did not, that original sin has nothing to do with biological inheritance,[1] that it is rather a claim for the inevitability, the inescapability of sin. However, it has always been a problem to state the doctrine in such a way that one is not saying that man, as created by God, is essentially evil; such a view would lead to the kind of dualism between God and the world according to which man cannot be redeemed without ceasing to be a man. Hegel considers himself preserved from such a result by the doctrine of the implicit unity of God and man. Adam in paradise represents man's implicit unity with God. But the Fall is nevertheless not only an inescapable human condition, but, for Hegel, a necessary categoreal determination. His opposition to God is not personal, not a contrary act of will; the opposition is categoreal, in the fact that he is finite and God is infinite, in the fact that he has an individual will at all.

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[1] See, e.g., Enzyklopädie § 24; Ph. der Geschichte III, pp. 728-729 (Sibree Tr., pp. 321-323); History of Philosophy, Haldane Tr., III, pp. 8-10; the fullest discussion is, of course, in the Philosophie der Religion, III-1, pp. 121-129; the interpretation is already suggested, though not yet worked out in detail, in Phänomenologie des Geistes, pp. 537-539 (Baillie Tr., pp. 770-772).

In the story, Adam falls by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That detail is ready-made for hegelian exegesis. After what has already been said, this point need not be labored. The knowledge of the great contrariety between good and evil, infinite and finite posits man's self-consciousness as individual and subjective, over against the universality and objectivity of God. Now he knows no longer the unreflective harmony of the animals with nature; he must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. He is expelled from paradise. All this is the result of feasting on the tree of knowledge. But mark well what God says of man's "crime": "Behold Adam is become as one of us, knowing Good and Evil." Needless to say, according to Hegel's exegesis this admission is not ironical. It is the plain fact of the matter. The apple of knowledge which kills the happy ape in the garden brings to life the man, with his pain, his self-seeking, his evil - and his destiny of self-conscious reconciliation with God. The "higher explanation" of the sentence from Genesis (that Adam is "one of us") is "that by this Adam is to be understood the second Adam, Christ".[1] The fall from abstract unselfconscious harmony with the divine into the agonizing disharmony of self-conscious individuated man is the necessary condition for the concrete reconciliation with God. The innocent must become a man in order to share in the explicit unity of the God-man.

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[1] This association, which still exists in the popular understanding and dismissal of the doctrine, has never been maintained, so far as I know, by any major Christian theologian. Variously interpreted as the doctrine has been, its interpreters have been quite unanimous in opposing this particular misunderstanding. The German translation of the term, though, - Erbsünde - has had the unfortunate result of perpetuating the misunderstanding.

iii. The Accomplishment of Reconciliation

There are many dimensions involved in Hegel's vision of the final reconciliation; it could be viewed under a variety of aspects. But at bottom Hegel sees the reconciliation as a religious movement, and describes it most consistently in religious terms. He opens his lectures on the philosophy of religion with a lyrical description of religion as the realm of peace and eternal rest and truth, where all the riddles and contradictions and pain of the world are resolved. Here at last philosophy is to deal with its ultimate object, with God and man in their reconciliation with one another. This reconciliation is fulfilled in the Absolute Religion, in Christianity. Therefore, in the next chapter, in which I shall undertake to define the role of the Gospel in this reconciliation, we shall examine more precisely the process, the means, by which this reconciliation is accomplished. However, we are already in a position to discuss just what it is that is accomplished in it.

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[1] Ph. der Religion, III-1, p. 126.

It is already clear that what is accomplished is a new form of self-consciousness. A decisive step toward this new self-consciousness is taken when man is conscious of the absolute Lord God over all things. Although the absolute Geist enters consciousness in this way in a high religious cultus, however, this consciousness of Geist remains estranged so long as this God is worshipped as man's radical Other, as the Mysterium over against which man is as nothing. The reconciliation occurs when this opposition, this separation, is overcome: when man becomes conscious that the infinite, universal God is man's own essential nature, when he recognizes his consciousness of God as his own true self-consciousness, when in consequence he regards his sinful, self-seeking particularity as only an accident, a non-essential. This new consciousness is the knowledge of faith, which is at once an apprehension of God as grace, and the elevation (Erhebung) of the soul to God. Now, the apprehension of God as grace means primarily accepting the implicit unity of the divine and human natures, which is the divine envisagement of man, as the ultimate reality of the situation. For it is God's grace precisely to see only the truth in man. Therefore, the transcendence of the separation between God and man

> . . . lies in the fact that God looks at the heart of man . . . at the inner, true, serious will. Outside this inner will, distinguished from this inner, substantial reality, it is still the externality, the imperfection of man that he can commit errors, that he can exist in a manner which is not adequate to this inner substantial essentiality, this substantial essential internality. This difficulty is overcome through the fact that God looks upon the heart, sees the substantial, so that the externality, the other-being, in general the finitude and imperfection . . . is relegated to the unessential and becomes known as the unessential.[1]

At first glance, this statement would seem to pass for a philosophical expression of Luther's _simul justus et peccator_. But implied in it is already the actual elevation of man's self-consciousness to unity with God. For the finite "_becomes known_ as the unessential", the identity of man with God becomes known as man's truth in man's apprehension of God as grace. This becoming known is not merely a noetic accomplishment as such, since knowledge, thought, consciousness are the primary ontological determinations. In this knowing, man is actually elevated to God; man's appropriation of the divine content in thought is precisely his own apotheosis. The appropriation is itself divine: theologically expressed, it is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, i.e. of God Himself, in man.

It goes without saying that this knowledge is not a mere possession of information. It is in fact a knowledge in which the opposition of subject and object is overcome, is the substantial incorporation of the divine in man. The character of this divine-human interpenetration is such that

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[1] _Ph. der Religion_, III-1, p. 203.

> . . . the divine content is posited as the self-conscious knowledge of it in the element of self-consciousness, of inwardness; on the one hand that the content is the truth, and on the other hand that it is the truth of finite Geist in general, i.e. his knowledge, so that he has his freedom in this knowledge, is himself the process which overthrows his special individuality and makes himself free in this content.[1]

The subject now enjoys the freedom of Geist itself, in this knowledge of Geist. In fact, the subject which apprehends and the divine Object which is apprehended must become identical, or there could be no apprehension. This subject-object distinction could not be abrogated in any finite relationship, but finitude is aufgehoben in precisely this relationship, since it is the infinite self-reflection of Geist in itself, its recovery of itself in its apparent other.

> Geist itself is merely this comprehension of itself. There is only one Geist, the universal divine Geist. . . . A division is formed in the comprehension of itself; Geist *comprehends* - *itself*; i.e. it is the comprehender and the comprehended; but it is this only as the unity of that which comprehends and that which is comprehended. The comprehended divine Geist is the objective, but the comprehending the subjective. But the divine Geist is not only the passivity of that which is comprehended; in its movement this passivity can only be an instant, only momentary. But it is the Aufhebung of this distinction between the subjective, active, and the objective, passive Geist. Geist is the one substantial unity; it is itself this activity of self-comprehension - the subjective Geist which comprehends the divine Geist is itself this divine Geist.[2]

To this extraordinarily clear summary statement, Hegel adds the remark that this comprehension "has been called faith. But it is not a bad, merely historical faith" - i.e. it is not the finite relationality, characterized by the otherness of

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[1] *Ibid*., III-1, pp. 182-183. See also Vol. I, pp. 288, 298-299.

[2] *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*: *Einleitung* (neue kritische Ausgabe), pp. 176-177 (Haldane Tr., I, pp. 72-73).

God and man. It is the faith which is identical in substance - if not yet in form - with absolute Knowledge. It may surprise some Lutherans, past and present, to be told that "we Lutherans - I am a Lutheran and will remain the same - have only this original faith".[1]

In the next chapter I shall consider the role of the positive, merely "historical" faith in detail. But it is already clear that Hegel's "original [Lutheran!] faith" is no longer merely positive, is not given to man to be accepted on the basis of an external authority. It is no longer "accidental" but essential, belonging to the universality of Reason. It now belongs to man insofar as he has become rational, insofar as he has grasped the "absolute negativity of thought" into which every finite or positive form is aufgehoben. Faith in this absolute form "rests solely on Reason itself, on Geist, i.e. on a mediation which aufhebt all mediation." Just as Adam recognizes his wife as flesh of his flesh, so it is, says Hegel, with the divine Idea in man: It is "Geist of my Geist", the testimony of God to Himself in man.[2] Within this faith-relationship which belongs inherently to Reason, even the divine commands lose their positivity, and become synonymous with Reason.[3] Thus Hegel considers that he has freed the concept of grace from any connotations of an external power. The new birth of man is not brought about by fate: it is at once God's absolutely free grace and man's own essential self-discovery, a "Sichaufheben" which leaves his imperfect finitude behind.[1] This grace, this living presence of Geist in man, is against the unio mystica, made explicit in worship and particularly in sacrament.[2] And since in entering into this unity which is his true essentiality, man renounces his accidental nature, his self-centered "body of sin", reconciliation involves repentance, sacrifice. The sacrifice of self-renunciation takes on ontological rigor in Hegel's philosophy, since one literally renounces his distinctive, particular nature. "God's grace and human sacrifice" is the "two-sided act" in which the individual self-consciousness is shed as a mere "hull".[3]

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 178 (Haldane Tr., p. 73).

[2] _Ph_. _der_ _Religion_, III-1, pp. 199-200.

[3] _Ph_. _der_ _Geschichte_, IV, p. 889 (Sibree Tr., p. 423). This advance is also tallied to the credit of the Reformation. There is a clearer affinity to Kant's concept of "autonomy" as opposed to "heteronomy". See Kant's _Grundlegung_ _zur_ _Metaphysik_ _der_ _Sitten_, pp. 431-445 (pagination of the Akademie edition).

In fact, Hegel frequently goes far beyond the position that God merely sees "the heart", the "essential", the divine determination of man while existentially the warfare continues. The unity of God and man has become an accomplished fact. In the explicit unity of the divine and human nature "everything has disappeared which belonged to external particularization - the finite has disappeared"![4] From the fact of this disappearance,

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1. Ph. der Religion, III-1, p. 207.

2. Ibid., I, p. 235; III-1, pp. 209, 214.

3. Ibid., I, pp. 257-259; see also pp. 267-268, 235-236. Of course, there are a great many more expressions for reconciliation in Hegel's philosophy; I have not tried to catalogue them all. For example, in the History of Philosophy Hegel at one point characterizes the process by which the finite and "natural" is shed as "education"! - and that in a context in which original sin is being discussed. Haldane Tr., Vol. III, p. 10.

4. Ph. der Religion, III-1, p. 135.

of course, there follows the disappearance of evil, of sin itself. For sin, we recall, attaches only to the particular self-will which stands over against God. Now this is overcome! Hegel explicitly distinguishes himself from the view which he attributes to Persian religion and to the philosophy of Kant, that good and evil remain in endless struggle against one another throughout history so that the victory of the good is always an obligation and never an accomplished fact. No, the victory has in fact occurred, and not only in the sense that the reconciled shall sin no more: Even "the occurrence" of evil "is made not to have occurred" (_das_ _Geschehene_ _ungeschehen_ _gemacht_ _werden_)! Of course such a reversal cannot take place "in a sensuous way", i.e. Hegel does not mean that an event is erased from the past or from memory. The non-occurrence of the occurrence of evil is accomplished "in a spiritual way, internally". Hegel means that when the one-sided subjectivity, the separation from the divine universality which is the essence of sin is overcome, sin can no longer in any way be said to attach to a man. When a man has become identical with Geist, the hull of finitude and sin has been shucked off; now he knows that the self which performed the evil deeds of the past has and indeed had no true reality. Sin - with finitude - has disappeared! The natural man and all his works has been left behind, in utter nothingness. This is the form in which Hegel understands the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins.[1]

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[1] _Ibid_., III-1, pp. 206-207. That arresting phrase "der Geist kann das Geschehene ungeschehen machen" appears also on p. 173, in relation to the death and resurrection of Christ.

In fact, the very distinction between good and evil is one of the abstract oppositions which is aufgehoben in the reconciliation in absolute Geist. The self-assertive destroyer who has eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is as thoroughly aufgehoben as Adam in the un-selfconscious innocence of paradise. Good and evil are not simply the same, but both have been absorbed in the absolute negativity of thought, together with all abstract categories.[1] The man who has assumed the standpoint of Geist is as much beyond the "litany of private virtues" as is World-history itself, and for the same reasons (see p. 98 above). Of course, the dissolution of the finite does not mean that all individuality is simply absorbed into an undifferentiated One. Reconciled individuals continue to exist, but they no longer exist as finite entities per se, as one pole of a duality between the finite and the infinite. The infinite has been realized precisely in the finite individuals.

In fact, it is as true to say that the infinite no longer stands over against the finite, as to say that the finite no longer exists in independence of the infinite. The reconciliation, the explicit "unity of the divine and human nature has significance for the determination not only of the human nature, but just as much of the divine."[2] Geist is now fully Geist, fully realized in actuality, enjoying the concreteness of absolute self-reflection - no longer an abstract self-reflection in itself, but a concrete self-reflection in its other. This attainment is in fact the true infinity, in which every finitude is as such dissolved. In it the nature of Geist is fulfilled, because it is the nature of Geist to be for Geist. This concrete self-reflection is attained, as Hegel frequently says, "in the congregation". Geist becomes fully and genuinely Geist only in (or "as") the congregation of people whose self-consciousness has become determinate as Geist. This congregation is realized in the cultus, the worship, of modern Protestant Christianity.[1]

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[1] Phänomenologie des Geistes, pp. 541-543 (Baillie Tr., pp. 776-777). See also Ph. der Religion, Vol. I, pp. 275-277, where the "geistige Kultus" is said to be the realm in which the opposition of good and evil is aufgehoben, together with the finitude of the "natural man".

[2] Ph. der Religion, III-1, p. 131. See also pp. 134-135, 139-141.

This worshipping congregation, however, is as it were the center which defines and penetrates a wide circle, which in its broadest circumference embraces modern, Protestant, Germanic (i.e. north-west European) society and culture in general. While the elevation of man to the standpoint of God, of Geist, is primarily a religious movement, coming into the world with the fulfillment of the Christian religion, the reconciliation thus attained does not remain merely "religious" in a special sense - as one realm set over against the others. It embraces every sphere of life and culture in its harmony. For the freedom of the reconciled man is infinite, unlimited. He no longer takes up a defensive or particularistic position against nature and society, but is "at home" everywhere, affirms as his own will the rational universality which rules all things. This is for Hegel the great truth of the Incarnation: that the divine becomes the worldly, receives the "secular as its own.[2] This harmonistic vision has many aspects, into which we cannot go in detail. A few examples will suffice to indicate the nature of this impregnation of the world with Geist through the reconciled congregation:

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[1] See Enzyklopädie, § 554. The theme receives its most exhaustive treatment, of course, in the Philosophy of Religion, where it is found throughout. See, e.g. I, pp. 226-278; III-1, pp. 13-19, 28-31, 34-36, 130-142, and especially 175-232.

[2] Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 216ff, 225; Enzyklopädie §§ 386, 482 et passim.

A manifestation of this reconciliation which has great political importance is that individual moral subjecthood is reconciled with the social order in the modern state. The state limits the power of one-sided factions in the society, so that the moral subjecthood of the individual is not violated by the particularistic self-seeking of any group or class. The state, that is to say, embodies both the individual and the universal, protects the standpoint of the individual because it itself occupies the standpoint of the universal.[1] In its reconciliation of individual and universal, however, the state is not merely an independent, merely "political" development: it occupies its universal standpoint only by virtue of its intrinsic relationship to religion. The level of the religion determines the level of the state and its laws. The state which enshrines absolute freedom must be grounded in the Absolute Religion; it is at once the result of the universality attained in the Absolute Religion, and the presupposition of the fulfillment of the Absolute Religion in the common life of man. Indeed, it is the presupposition for the realization of Geist in general, in all its higher forms - art, morality, religion, philosophy.[2] The state itself, as the reconciliation of the universal and the particular, is a "divine institution": "The divinity of the state is the Idea as it exists on earth." Its social morality (Sittlichkeit) takes precedence over the personal ethical conviction which is merely "moralisch".[1]

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[1] E.g. Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts, § 260 et passim. See Marcuse's discussion of the evolution of freedom in the state, as unity of subjective and objective freedom; and his criticism of Hegel's development of this doctrine: Reason and Revolution, pp. 169-223.

[2] Enzyklopädie, §§ 535-552; Ph. der Religion, I, pp. 302-322; Ph. der Geschichte, Vol. I, pp. 110-123, Vol. III, pp. 747-748 (Sibree Tr., pp. 38-54, 335).

Another aspect of Hegel's doctrine of reconciliation which was to be of great significance - positively and negatively - among those who followed him, was his teaching concerning property. By means of possession, "dead" objects, opaque to Reason and limiting freedom, are appropriated to Geist. They become directed to rational purposes, a medium for the expression of freedom. Of course property can be the medium for the expression of arbitrary caprice when the owner is himself merely subjedtive. But ownership in a rational society, among free and reconciled people, becomes the means for the appropriation of the natural world to Geist - i.e. its aufhebung as merely natural and irrational; just as in art the natural medium is aufgehoben into a spiritual form. Thus in the Philosophy of History, freedom of property stands alongside freedom of person and freedom of opportunity, as a form of freedom embodied necessarily in the laws of a reconciled society.[2] Thus Hegel's doctrine of reconciliation becomes wedded not only to Christendom but to bourgeois society.[3]

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, I, pp. 112, 115 (Sibree Tr., p. 39).

[2] Ph. der Geschichte, IV, pp. 926-928 (Sibree Tr., pp. 447-448). See Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts, §§ 40ff; Enzyklopädie §§ 487-492.

[3] A basic, dominating thesis of Löwith's interpretation of nineteenth century intellectual history is based on this point: It was Hegel's mighty vision to reconcile the absolute truth of philosophy with Protestant Christianity and bourgeois society and culture, i.e. with the religious and social forms of his own time and place. Thus the dialectic which is used by the young Hegel to criticize the existing order is turned in his mature work to the task of rationalizing it and accommodating to it. In the subsequent history, this synthesis was systematically dissolved, notably in Marx's critique of the "bourgeois-capitalistic world" and in Kierkegaard's critique of the "bourgeois-Christian world". Von Hegel Zu Nietzsche, pp. 162-191 et passim.

Hegel drew various overall socio-moral implications from his doctrine of reconciliation. Now man knows that God, Geist, the Absolute, is the truth of his own being, and of the being of every man. This places an infinite worth on man.

> Man, finite when regarded for himself, is yet at the same time the Image of God and a fountain of infinity in himself. He is the purpose of his own existence - has in himself an infinite worth, and the determination of eternity.[1]

It is the Christian religion which has brought this high humanistic outlook into the world, according to Hegel. Such blatant violations of this valuing as slavery are clearly ruled out of court. Regardless of his background, regardless of "all particularity attaching to birth or country", every man "in his simple quality as man" is to be accorded the highest value. Neither tradition nor custom, nor any other spurious basis of morality, is to be allowed to stand in the way of this supreme position of man in the scale of worth.[2] This point is important, in relation to the charges of "anti-liberal" influence that have been made against him, especially in the light of subsequent history. The issue has been considerably argued by specialists, and in any case I cannot explore it in detail in this essay. It does seem to me that the implication of certain of his doctrines, e.g. the view of the state, conflicts in practice with this staunchly humanistic outlook. But at least in intention, Hegel never swerved from his conviction that the individual worth of each man takes precedence over all other values. If it is undeniably true that the social critic of his earlier years tended later to be absorbed into the defender of the existing order, it is just as true that the rights of the individual continued throughout to be the fixed criterion of his judgment concerning competing social orders. Even if he criticized the form of the doctrine of "inalienable rights", he continued to defend its substance. While it is true that merely "subjective freedom" must be aufgehoben in terms of his doctrine of absolute freedom, this does not mean that subjective freedom is merely set aside. While he did pronounce paeons of praise to the state, the state is praised precisely as the defender of the individual and the substantialization of his freedom, against every reactionary element in the society. He never suggested that the individual is primarily a servant of the state, or that his interests could be sacrificed to the special interests of the political power; and the spirit of his thought is even further from such a suggestion than is his explicit statement. He never ceased being a child of the Enlightenment, even when he went "beyond" the Enlightenment. The main question concerns the doctrine of absolute freedom in which subjective freedom was supposed to be gathered up: Can one really make the individual man into an irreducible value without recognizing and protecting - at least insofar as it is consistent with the common weal - his right to remain stubbornly fixed at the "moment" of subjective freedom? Can a state predicated on Hegel's absolute freedom avoid inflicting the most soul-destroying "estrangement" upon its rebels and heretics? Can it avoid silencing or at least cutting itself off from any criticism which comes from a standpoint not acknowledged in its own "absolute" presuppositions? Perhaps Hegel's harmonistic vision required a sharper break with the liberal instincts nurtured by the Enlightenment than he realized. There is after all some peril to the individual involved in the state's occupying a standpoint beyond good and evil.

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, Vol. III, p. 745 (Eng. p. 333).

[2] Ibid., III, pp. 745-747 (Eng. pp. 334-335).

This criticism is only one aspect of some issues I shall wish to raise. Of course such an audacious doctrine as Hegel's is bound to be subjected to more or less sophisticated philosophical and theological criticism. It has been so criticized from its birth, and must continue to be, just because Hegel has thought on the level of the most fundamental philosophical construction. Only a philosophy which is both daring and rigorously constructed can be fruitfully criticized, because it is only in such a philosophy that thought is taken deeper into its own inner movements, where its basic issues become accessible and the problematic nature of all thought becomes evident.

iv. Did Hegel Think the World Had Become the Kingdom of God?

But Hegel's doctrine immediately evokes naive criticism as well - "naive" not in the sense of being stupid, but in the sense of being directed against what seems to be a perfectly flagrant and obvious error, the detection of which does not require deep probing into first principles. Such naive criticism can in fact be the most damaging of all. For example, many fair-minded men, whether philosophically trained or not, are bound to regard this doctrine of reconciliation as an only too obvious victory of speculation over the evident facts of our situation. Protestant civilization, in its social, political, economic, cultural life, and certainly in its religious life, just cannot be said to be reconciled in this sense, in fact, bears little resemblance to the perfectly astonishing claims which Hegel makes on its behalf.

It is a puzzle to know, though, to what extent Hegel believed that this great harmony of all things had indeed occurred. There are certainly plenty of bold statements to the effect that the sheaves have indeed been brought in, that Geist is fulfilled in the congregation, that absolute freedom has been attained.

The popular impression that Hegel thought the triumphant culmination of history had occurred in the Europe of his day does have some textual support. For example, in speaking of World-history as like the sun, which rises in the East and sets in the West, he qualifies his metaphor by the remark that "although the earth is a sphere, yet history does not make a circle around it"; "East" and "West" are not merely relative terms in World-history, as they are in geography. The "sun" of World-history has a definite place of rising and a definite place of setting. It "goes from East to West; for Europe is absolutely [schlechthin] the end of World-history, Asia the beginning." Since history commonly refers to the past, and since Hegel sometimes so limits the term (as we shall see), one could at a pinch interpret such a remark to mean that modern Europe is simply the end of history as it has progressed to the present time; but this would be a rather strained interpretation. He seems to be speaking of World History here in a more total sense. Only a few sentences before he has spoken of this sun as having set, in fact, as no longer being needed: The "external" sun was needed only at earlier stages of Geist's "day's work", for the result of this day's work that Geist "completes [vollbringt] in World-history" is the completion by man of "an inner sun, the sun of his consciousness" or his spiritual freedom.[1] This achievement, in modern Europe, has presumably completed the course run by the "external sun" of World-history.

Again, in introducing this "Germanic" world of Western Europe, Hegel makes it clear that it is Christianity, in its Germanic fulfillment, which has created this inner sun in man. The Church, in which the Geist of God has bedome "present" has declared to the individual the forgiveness of his sins. The individual thus possesses

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, I, pp. 242-243 (Sibree Tr., p. 103).

> the enjoyment of the reconciliation and lives on earth as in heaven. According to this aspect the Church is the present Kingdom of Heaven and the Christian world the world of consummation [Vollendung]; the principle is fulfilled, and thus the end of days has fully come: the Idea can see nothing more in Christianity which is unsatisfied.[1]

Again, at the end of the lectures on the history of philosophy, Hegel seems to see the modern Philosophy - preeminently his own - as providing a similar culmination of all philosophical history. Speaking of this final Philosophy, which after all is the embodiment of the Christian Idea, Hegel finds its result equally decisive:

> A new epoch has arisen in the world. It appears that the World-Geist has now succeeded in stripping off all alien objective being and finally grasping itself as absolute Geist; it begets out of itself what is objective to it, and holds it within its own power while remaining at rest. The struggle of finite self-consciousness with absolute self-consciousness . . . ceases. . . . The whole of World-history in general until now, and the history of philosophy in particular, which only expressed this struggle, seem to have reached their goal, where this absolute self-consciousness . . . has ceased to be anything alien, where Geist is therefore actual as Geist.[2]

Now, is this goal that has been reached the absolute goal of all true philosophy, or is it only an important stage to be followed by other stages? Some scholars wish to interpret Hegel to mean the latter,[3] and it is true that Hegel speaks of this achievement as

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[1] Ibid., IV, p. 762 (Sibree Tr., p. 342).

[2] Vorlesung über die Geschichte der Philosophie (Jubiläum Ausgabe), III, pp. 689-690 (Haldane Tr., III, pp. 551-552).

[3] E.g. J. N. Findlay, who cites this "grandiloquent passage" but concludes, consonant with his general interpretation that Hegel never really intended anything that a sensible Englishman could not appreciate, that Hegel really didn't mean anything all that grandiloquent. Findlay points out that Hegel adds a rather modest-sounding comment that we must raise ourselves above mere personal opinion and vanity, that our individual thoughts are of no great value. He quotes Hegel as saying that "it is the standpoint of the individual to apprehend the inner substantial Spirit: within the whole, individuals are like blind men whom the inner Spirit drives." (Italics are Findlay's.) It appears to me that Hegel is merely referring here to his

"the standpoint of present day", with which the history discussed in the lectures is "for the present concluded". This would seem to hedge a bit the more absolute claim, since, as we shall see, Hegel denies that philosophy can prophesy the future. Still, that this achievement is the standpoint of the present day does not deny that it is the absolute standpoint, at least so far as its basic lines are concerned. While Hegel repeatedly stresses the limitation of a philosopher to the standpoint of his own age, this "limitation" need not impose much of a pinch on a philosopher whose thought expresses the age in which "the end of days has fully come"! After all, if this philosophy is the adequate expression of a reconciled world, in which alienation has been overcome and Geist is recognized as Geist, what can remain for philosophy to do, at least beyond some tidying up of this System?

Clearly, though, Hegel does not mean that finitude and sin and error no longer characterize the modern world at all. If he did mean that, why would it be necessary to be so polemical against contemporary philosophy, theology, political theory, etc? He

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(continued from p. 172) characteristic teaching that the final standpoint of Philosophy is not the achievement of any one philosopher, but is the cumulative achievement of the whole history of thought. Since all philosophies have been developments of one Philosophy, the man whose System contains this Philosophy has simply contributed the final touches which complete the total historical task. But to Findlay, "These words suggest that while it is right for a philosopher to apply the word 'absolute' to his system, and to say that he *knows* its truth, provided it represents the latest fruit of philosophical progress, it will be just as right (*though Hegel finds it* unnecessary to say so [italics mine!]) for another philosopher to speak of it otherwise. Hegelian Truth is on this view a strictly contemporary affair, and Hegel expects no more permanence for his own system than to be preserved in such good systems to come after it. This interpretation of his statements is at least as reasonable as thinking that he really thought the shades of night were coming down in 1830." No doubt it is more "reasonable" in a certain moderate sense, but it is doubtful that it contains the much more radical standpoint of Hegel's "Reason" itself!

produces plenty of evidence that his world is still misled by many abstractions, false oppositions, stubborn individual subjectivities. For example, in the philosophy of religion, religion is said to be the absolute Truth, the state the true form of reality - but "our age" is still suffering from the estrangement of these two from one another.[1] In the philosophy of history, Hegel plays a lively game of now-you-see-it-now-you-don't: the achievement of reconciliation is announced at a number of points, e.g. in the Reformation, in the development of the modern state, etc., but then, no, there are always some oppositions as yet unresolved. A task still remains, in fact. At the end of the philosophy of history the appreciation of Reason in its (accomplished) knowledge of God is said to be "the striving of our day",[2] and the lectures on the History of Philosophy close with a "summons" to his hearers

> to grasp the Geist of the time, which is in us by nature, and draw it out of its natural condition, i.e. seclusion, lifelessness, into the light of day, and - each in his own place - to bring it into the daylight with consciousness.[3]

There is nothing in Hegel's writings to suggest that the final reconciliation has not been realized within the Christian Church and the Protestant world, and has not been given its adequate form in his own philosophy (embracing all previous philosophies). Yet it is evidently possible to excuse one's self from the grand harmony, even in the end of days.

Hegel suggests how serious such defection may be in the passage on the forgiveness of sins - or the Aufhebung of sins - discussed in the previous section. And in the suggestion he gives an interesting twist to still another hoary Christian doctrine: If "the natural will is given up" then "there is no sin which is not forgiven - except the sin against the Holy Ghost, the denial of Geist, since only Geist is the power which can overcome [aufheben] them all".[1] This remark is fairly self-explanatory, in light of what has been said: all sins can be forgiven, or aufgehoben, except the refusal to accept the standpoint of the Aufhebung, i.e. the standpoint of Geist. This sin is committed by those who stubbornly adhere to the finite standpoint, who resign themselves to finite limitations and oppositions, who remain fixed at the standpoint of individual subjectivity, who reject the universality of their reconciliation with Geist.[2] Nor is such stubbornness merely a theoretical possibility in this end of days. Hegel does not shrink from accusing the philosophy of the abstract Understanding, the philosophy of Enlightenment, of "Räsonnement" of having committed in his own day the sin against the Holy Ghost![3]

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[1] Ph. der Religion, I, p. 311.

[2] Ph. der Geschichte, IV, p. 937 (not found in the translation).

[3] Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie (Jubilaüm Ausgabe), III, p. 691 (Haldane Tr., III, p. 553.

Nor is this sin against Geist only an unfortunate vestige left over from former ages, which a little rear-guard action on the part of Geist can clear up. Hegel sees the future as a massive threat to the harmony he describes. In fact, an extraordinary feature of Hegel's thought - contrary to the blind optimism often attributed to him - is the rather consistent pessimism of his expectations concerning the future. This feature is never systematically developed, because of Hegel's principle that philosophy cannot become prophecy, cannot speculate regarding the future. Yet it is at least a biographical fact that Hegel was gloomy about the prospects, especially in his later years; it is hardly too much to say that he resigned himself to the coming of a new dark age.

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[1] Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 206-207.

[2] Ibid., III-1, p. 181; Geschichte der Philosophie: Einleitung (neue kritische Ausgabe), p. 181 (Haldane Tr., I, p. 74). It is of some importance in relation to the subject of our next chapter to notice that in the latter citation the sin against the Spirit is specifically related to inadequate christology. An example of the unforgivable sin is to treat Christ himself as merely an individual who lived once upon a time in Judea, or who lives now in heaven only - and not in a universal form in his congregation.

[3] Ph. der Religion, III-1, p. 84. See Enzyklopädie, Zusatz to § 571 for a discussion of "infinite subjectivity" as another form of this unforgivable sin (though it is not expressly designated as such).

It is highly significant, for example, that he concludes his lectures on the philosophy of religion with the topic - in Hegel's own manuscript - "The Dissolution [Vergehen] of the Congregation"! Hegel sees in Enlightenment types of philosophy and in the growth of subjectivism in religion a flight from the objectivity of the truth in its concrete reconciliation. Yet he is aware of the dissonance of this talk of "dissolution" with the absoluteness of the reconciliation he has proclaimed. He reminds himself that "the Holy Spirit as such lives eternally in his congregation", that the gates of hell cannot prevail against the Christian teaching. Clearly, then, "to speak of dissolution is to end on a false note." Yet there is no very convincing solution to the dilemma. Religion must "flee into philosophy". But this is hardly a solution to enliven the heart, since Hegel recognizes that philosophy's hold on the truth is isolated, belated, without concrete world-historical significance.[1]

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[1] Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 229-231. From Hegel's own manuscript. The editor, Lasson, titles this last section "Vergehen der Gemeinde und Neuwerden" in his edition of this work. He evidently felt sure that Hegel didn't mean for "Vergehen" to have the last word, despite the testimony of Hegel's own text. In his Einführung in Hegels Religionsphilosophie, pp. 146-148, Lasson is troubled about this problem, and wonders why Hegel did not point out the rejuvenating power that lies in the Absolute Religion. He explains this "Lücke" in various ways, even suggesting that Hegel must have been caught short at the end of the semester!

Such a flight into philosophy would be consonant with an important motif in Hegel's historical thinking: that an epoch is completed in a great philosophy, which grasps its idea explicitly in thought. But since such a philosophy is possible only after the epoch is complete - only after the idea of that epoch has made itself fully explicit - the philosophical denouement is also the final curtain which brings the epoch to a close. In receiving its ideal fulfillment, its actuality is in fact already at an end, the epoch has lost its vitality. Philosophy is able to grasp the advance of Geist only after it has occurred; it is always too late. It begins with the "decline [Untergang] of a real world", when it "paints gray in gray, the freshness of youth, the vitality, is already past", it attains a reconciliation of the tensions of the age, but its reconciliation "is not in the reality, but in the ideal world".[1] One must be cautious in applying such general considerations to Hegel's view of his own philosophy, since the absolute nature of the reconciliation expressed there makes his philosophy qualitatively different from those which have preceded it. Yet it is clear that even his philosophy can only embody an ideal reconciliation as such; the reality must be sought elsewhere than in his philosophy. Furthermore, at least privately Hegel did draw the analogy between previous ages of culmination and transition and his own age.[2]

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[1] Geschichte der Philosophie: Einleitung (neue kritische Ausgabe), p. 151 (Haldane Tr., I, pp. 51-52. See also Ph. der Geschichte, I, pp. 176-178 (Sibree Tr., pp. 76-77).

[2] Löwith quotes from a letter of Hegel's to the editor of a new edition of the works of Proclus, in which Hegel remarks upon the singular appropriateness of the appearance of this edition. According to Hegel, the whole first period of the history of philosophy - embracing a thousand years - ended with Proclus. In the letter he remarks upon the "monstrous step" from classical to Christian philosophy, of which turning point Proclus was the milestone, and adds that such a step is "now again" to be made. Von Hegel zu Nietzsche, p. 53; from Briefe, II, p. 52.

And of course Hegel spoke again of philosophy painting "its gray in gray" in the famous passage in the Preface to the Rechtsphilosophie, where he seems more certainly to be referring to his own philosophy. The pessimism of that passage is well-known. "The owl of Minerva begins its flight only with the falling of dusk." The "shape of life" which has "grown old" "cannot be rejuvenated, but only understood" in philosophy's "gray in gray".[1] If the reconciliation in religion is in such condition that it must "flee into philosophy", then its hold on reality is tenuous indeed. The twilight in which philosophy exercises its function bodes darkness, not only for religion but for the "reconciled" social and political order as well.

This dark vision certainly complicates Hegel's doctrine of reconciliation, and brings the dilemma implicit in it sharply into focus. To regard it as a kind of secularized eschatology, or as a utopian dream of an olympian future for man, as it is often regarded, is clearly too simple. Contrary to some of the sillier interpretations, Hegel did know that there was going to be a future, and was personally rather pessimistic about what it might contain. At any rate he considered philosophy to be blind to the future, and did not exclude himself from his frequent remark that the individual belongs to his own time. He does, for example, refuse to discuss America in his Philosophy of History, but he makes bold to characterize it as "the land of the future where, in the ages that lie before us . . . the burden of the world's history shall reveal itself." So far it had only echoed the "old world". But Hegel is sure that it will "abandon the ground on which hitherto World-history has occurred". This judgment is not intended in a merely geographical sense; it is the suggestion of a new epoch to come. But just because America belongs to the future, it cannot be treated in the Philosophy of History.

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[1] Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts, p. 17.

> The philosopher has nothing to do with prophecy. In terms of history we have rather to do with what has been, and with that, what is;

But then Hegel adds,

> in philosophy however, [we have to do] with that which neither has been nor shall be, but with that which is and eternally is - with Reason . . . [1]

The distinction between eternal truth and what has been attained historically makes perfectly good sense, unless it is claimed that the eternal truth has already been realized in history. But that is just what Hegel claims! Hence arises the dilemma.

In the light of what has been said here, one can easily see some grounds for, but also some difficulties in, an interpretation of Hegel's doctrine of reconciliation that has recently gained ground. This interpretation, in effect, seizes one of the horns of the dilemma: According to this view, when Hegel regards his philosophy, for example, as the fulfillment of all philosophy, he does not mean that his philosophy is the final standpoint in which the future will bask, but is simply the end of the philosophical discipline as such, the gathering together of two and a half millenia of philosophy into a final grand synthesis before the dissolution of philosophy in general, the brilliant glow which precedes the flickering out. Again, Hegel's philosophy is the intellectual gathering together of a great historical epoch at its close; the epoch is fulfilled in bourgeois Christendom, the speculative apprehension of which in Hegel's philosophy heralds its dissolution. Again, Hegel's philosophy embraces the history of the Christian logos in the world, and its realization in its full transparency in the late Protestant era. This history is now ended; the Christian Idea has played itself out. After this will come - we know not what.[1]

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, I, pp. 209-210 (Sibree Tr., pp. 86-87). See ibid., IV, p. 758 (Sibree Tr., p. 350), where Hegel also suggests that the Slavs may have something to contribute in the future.

But such an interpretation, which relativizes philosophy itself, cannot be found in Hegel's own text, unless some of his comments on the relation of previous philosophies to passing epochs is simply transferred to the relation of his own (final) philosophy to the total Greek-Christian epoch. One suspects that if Hegel had meant something of this sort he would have said it more plainly. The reconciliation he describes is, after all, the infinite self-reflection of Geist. If it were only the fulfillment of an epoch, then not only Hegel's philosophy would not be absolute, but the Christian revelation would not be absolute, indeed Hegel's Absolute would not be absolute.

Yet if one seizes the other horn of this dilemma, the conclusion becomes hardly more supportable, either in Hegel's text or in general. Is the reconciliation described and achieved in Hegel's philosophy claimed to be the absolute culmination of all history, the ideal become fully real, the Kingdom of God come on earth? But then what can the future be? A further development along the same lines? - but how can there be a development further than this? Or simply the spread of what has been attained to all peoples and all spheres of activity? - but then the reconciliation is still not fully explicit. Furthermore, the theme of "dusk" in Hegel's thought seems to point in quite another direction. Must the future, then, be a massive mistake, a forsaking of the absolute standpoint won, a world-destroying sin against Geist? - but Hegel never draws such a conclusion, and seems not to have intended so black a night, despite all his pessimism about the future. This would also be a flat denial of the claim that Geist rules the world. Of course, Hegel refuses to speculate philosophically about the future. But one cannot simply take refuge in the unknowability of the future; the point is that none of these possibilities would be viable on the presupposition that the Absolute is fully realized. Furthermore, on this supposition the "naive criticism" mentioned at the beginning of this section becomes unanswerable: There is and always has been too much misery, too much folly, too much religious faithlessness and hypocrisy, too much social injustice and personal inhumanity in the world, to make anything but mockery of the claim that earth has become heaven.

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[1] See Löwith, Von Hegel zu Nietzsche, pp. 52-58, where Löwith not only interprets Hegel in this way, but seems himself to regard Hegel's philosophy as such a turning point. See also Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, pp. 251-257, where again the end of philosophy in Hegel seems to be accepted as a fact: the advance into the future is beyond philosophy itself into critical social theory, which drives "beyond the social and political order to which philosophy had tied its fate."

I conclude only that Hegel does not accept either horn of this dilemma, and furthermore that the dilemma cannot be resolved on hegelian grounds at all. One further consideration should be noticed: the basic dilemma is only made obvious by the claim that the reconciliation has been attained in an historical epoch which has already occurred. But in principle the dilemma would be precisely the same if it were claimed that the Absolute shall be realized in the historical future.

V. Further Critical Comments

One encounters another dilemma, this time raised not by a problem stemming from Hegel's conclusion but by a factor inherent to the nature of the dialectic itself. What is the ontological status of the estranged world as the "other" of Geist? It is necessary for Hegel to say that this "other", posited at the second or dialectical moment, has no truth or genuine reality peculiarly its own; its truth is only to be "for" Geist. Otherwise it would be an independent realm, capable of ultimate resistance to Geist; reconciliation with Geist on Geist's own terms would be impossible. Yet to say that this other has no genuine reality over against Geist would be precisely to say that Geist has no genuine other, that the otherness is only an appearance. But if Geist has no genuine other, then Geist cannot become actualized, existent, by its incorporation in its other; there is no reconciliation, but only an appearance of such. Geist would only complete a circle within itself, dialectical only in the sense of including a moment of apparent movement into an other. But this would mean that the truth is only Idea, that there is no absolute Geist, no reconciliation of finite and infinite, no embodiment of the universal in the particular.[1] One could turn this problem around: The Idea must become incorporated into existence in order to be real. Therefore its reality depends upon the reality of the existent. But if the existent as such is real, then it is independent of the Idea, and the Idea can exercise no sovereignty over it and can achieve no reconciliation with it - unless the Idea stands against existence as an ought, to be reconciled by the existent's free moral act, as in the Kantian philosophy. But then the reconciliation has no necessity.

Of course, as we saw in § ii of this chapter, Hegel shows how the existent is no sooner posited than the reality thus given to it becomes problematic, that it contains its negation in itself as a positive. If it is assumed that the world is characterized by plurality and becomingness, the truth of this construction is difficult to deny. An entity is what it is, positively, in its immediacy, only insofar as it negates its contemporaries in space and its predecessors in time; and it is of course subject to the same negation by its contemporaries and successors. But this negativity does not call the reality of the world, as the other of Geist, into question. The difficulty arises when Hegel claims that the plurality and becomingness of the world, which is assumed in this negativity, is itself negated: when he attempts to resolve the plurality into the unity of absolute Geist, particularity into the universality of absolute Geist, becomingness, time, into the thought in which absolute Geist is realized.

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[1] Nicolai Hartmann seems to have a similar problem in mind when he charges that Hegel does not in fact fulfill his announced pattern that "alles Ansichsein hat seinen Sinn in Fürsichsein". In fact, "seine alles tragende Dialektik bringt es nicht zum Fürsichsein. Sie bleibt beim Ansichsein stehen." (Aristoteles und Hegel, p. 16) Hartmann holds that true dialectic is embodied in Aristotle's doctrine of aporia, that the antinomies developed from the attempt to grasp the reality of things are finally insoluble, that such contradictions finally characterize the real relations of things. To say that they are dialectically soluble is precisely to say that they are insoluble in thought. This, Hartmann thinks, is the truth of Hegel's dialectic, though Hegel, unlike Aristotle, often fabricates (vortäuscht) a solution to the aporia when in fact there is none. (p. 11 et passim)

Resolution, of course, does not mean obliteration for Hegel. The finite, the becoming, is not simply lost. Indeed, the infinite is realized in the finite. Yet that is only a secondary consequence, a corollary, of the fact that the finite is raised to the standpoint of the infinite. These two statements do not simply stand side by side, they are not simply two sides of the same coin, it is not a matter of indifference which one is stated first. The ground of the reconciliation is the Idea, the universal, the timeless; the infinite negativity is not the negativity of time, belonging to the becomingness of things, but the negativity of thought in which all becomingness is negated. The finite, the other of Geist, has reality only insofar as it is aufgehoben in the absolute negativity of pure thought, when it is raised to the infinity of Geist itself.

The abstract Idea is also aufgehoben, but in quite a different sense: it becomes concretely realized as the Absolute Idea into which the finite is aufgehoben. Genuine reality is attained in either case only with the emergence of the Absolute at the end of a teleological movement in the becomingness of the world. But the telos as yet unrealized but implicitly present and "sovereign" at every stage in this movement is the Idea. Only on this presupposition is thought the absolute negativity in an ontological sense; and given this presupposition not only is the non-being of every event posited in the same movement that posits its being, but the succession of events is itself similarly negated. The supposed other of Geist is an appearance, for even time, embracing the succession of events in which the absolute is realized in "the world", is negated. That is why past occurrences can be made not to have occurred (p. 163 above).

But then there is no real reconciliation of the Idea with its other. The Idea is related to its other as truth to falsity. The other becomes "reconciled" to the Idea only in the sense that a conscious "other" - a human mind - becomes aware of its own falsity as such, abnegates its distinct self-consciousness, in its knowledge that the Idea alone is true. But this is precisely abnegation, and not reconciliation. Yet Hegel clearly intends a genuine reconciliation. Reconciliation on his terms, however, requires two things of the finite "other": that it be genuinely independent and real, so that there actually is something with which Geist is reconciled, a concreteness by inherence in which the abstract Idea can become real; and that Geist be its inner truth and reality throughout, that it have no independent reality of its own not assimilable and reconcilable with Geist. But these two qualities of the world, required for Hegel's doctrine of reconciliation, conflict. Obviously, this conflict is simply the reverse side of the conflict I have noted between "creationist" and immanent-idealist motifs in Hegel's doctrine of Geist (Chapter III, §§ ii-iii above). Of course Hegel intended to have "reconciled" both of these conflicts, along with all other "abstract oppositions". But these conflicts arise from the nature of his dialectic of alienation and reconciliation itself, and I do not believe that the effort to reconcile them was, or could be, successful.

Beyond the problem of internal consistency which seems to me to arise, however, we must raise the wider question whether this dialectic of alienation and reconciliation is adequate as an analysis and resolution of the human problem. This question is far more difficult and far more serious; I can only propose a few remarks "toward" an answer.

The dismissal of Hegel is only too easy, especially in an age suspicious of "ideology" and perhaps of ideas as well. Have not these "ideologies" produced all the distortions from which our age is suffering? Should we not deal with "realities" and not with these pretentious "idealities"? But the exasperated advocates of "plain realities" are surely far more dogmatic and far more pretentious than Hegel. Hegel is at least modest enough, sufficiently aware of the problematic character of statements about reality, to consider it necessary to defend his standpoint through exhaustive metaphysical analysis of ultimate premises. There is, after all, no dogmatism so complacent as that which merely sits pat behind the deliverances of "common sense" and "modern science". "Common sense" has its metaphysical presuppositions, fuzzy though they may be; calling it "common sense" simply obscures their dubiety by making one so sure of the rectitude of his opinions that he does not even need to defend them. Similarly with those "objective" historians who have retrieved so many lectures by professorial merriment and spleen about the ridiculous Hegel (with Augustine and a few others) who has imposed an "arbitrary pattern" on the "facts" of history.[1] Hegel's "absurdity" in fact consists in his having been clear and reflective about his criteria of the "historically significant". He views the "plain facts" from the standpoint of Reason and Christian wisdom, and he knows what he means by these terms. That is why no serious philosopher, and least of all a Christian theologian, can rest content with such easy dismissals.

Another dismissal that is only slightly more sophisticated consists in the attack on Hegel simply as a believer in inevitable progress, without clear recognition of the theological form which Hegel's doctrine takes. Thus even so excellent an interpreter as Marcuse can charge that according to Hegel

> the crossing to a new historical form is at the same time a progress to a higher historical form - a preposterous interpretation, because all the victims of oppression and injustice are witness against it, as are all the vain sufferings and sacrifices of history.[2]

- an interpretation of Hegel which is itself rather preposterous. One might rather reproach Hegel for saying that there are some historical forms which have no significance at all, and that there are sufferings and sacrifices which are indeed "vain". But however that may be, Hegel's point is that Geist rules history, that in

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[1] See Hegel's exposure of such pretensions to historical "impartiality" in Enzyklopedie, § 549, Zusatz, which also contains a good defense of his doctrine of Reason in History.

[2] Reason and Revolution, p. 246. Marcuse acknowledges, to be sure, that history is also the course of man's alienation according to Hegel, and is not a course of "unswerving progress". Loc. cit.

Geist's progressive self-realization there are in fact advances in history. His standpoint is the activity of Geist, and not the fact of new forms in history. That is why, again, the theologian cannot so easily thrust Hegel's doctrine aside, and can less easily be excused for mistaking his meaning. If one holds that God is active in history; and if one does not mean by this merely that God is present in an undifferentiated way everywhere, but that He is realizing definite purposes in certain events and historical movements - then one must face seriously Hegel's claim that God has been bringing about a new state of affairs in history.

For Hegel, however, the advance of history to reconciliation is accomplished by a movement of Geist which is both altogether immanent in history and necessary in the sense of being the projection in history of Geist's own internal dialectic. Only so, on Hegel's terms, is reconciliation possible. Only what is already implicit can (significantly) become. The reconciliation, the telos toward which historical process is moving, is contained all the while in the Idea which is immanent in this process. Now, is it really true that nothing can become which is not implicit in this sense? This is a question that has relevance far beyond Hegel's special formulation; Hegel has systematized, in rigorous form, an outlook that is very widespread in Western thought: that there are no radical novelties, or at least that such novelties would have to be put down as aberrations having nothing constructive to do with the "realization" of the good (to speak of "realization" is already to stand within this outlook). Achievement is the return to an essential standpoint which logically precedes the whole movement. A man is not made new; he "finds himself". "Becoming" is the becoming-actual of the essential. For Hegel this principle is true for the individual and for history as a whole. But in what sense, then, can there be events, a history? Of course, to speak of something as "essential", or "potential" is not to say that it is already actual. Its becoming actual occurs only in an event in time and space. The happening is new, but it is the happening of something "old", indeed of something timeless. This view of the matter is presupposed in the language of "alienation" and "reconciliation".

There are certainly difficulties in trying to break out of this outlook and to speak of a genuine novum, something new happening - difficulties closely analogous to speaking of God's creation out of nothing! Apart from this ur-event, however, to speak in this way is not necessarily to say that an event is altogether unrelated to those which precede it (cf. Whitehead's relevant novelty), or that there are no continuities in time; nor does it deny all possible meanings of "potentiality". What I would deny is that an historical event is determinate before it occurs, either as an inevitable result or as a possibility. So far, of course, I have only ruled out a simple determinist account of an event, which Hegel's program does not represent. But more specifically: I would deny that an historical event can be the necessary result of a movement immanent in its past, that it can be simply the "actualization" of a presupposed "truth" immanent in the historical process.[1] There is of course no decisive refutation of such a view, since Hegel denies that this immanent truth can be recognized before it actualizes itself; and there is nothing in the "actualization" itself to prove that it is or is not the embodiment of a truth immanent in the past or from "the beginning" - unless it is presupposed that nothing can become which is not already implicit! But in such an outlook history itself loses all its glory. Nothing decisive really happens in history; history is only the stage on which is read the script which is "written" out of time, out of history. No significant decision is made by the existent participants in history; the significant "decisions" are made in the determination of the Idea and executed by its hidden "cunning". There is no possibility that genuine values be created anew by mere human decision, that a man may project himself by his own decision into a form of self-hood beyond both the self given in the past and present and the "self" envisioned in the Idea immanent in past and present. Of course there is a stupendous doctrine of self-transcendence in Hegel, but by a necessary and immanent movement, such that the "higher" self projected by this transcendence is determinate from the beginning of the process - that in fact "higher" means precisely adequacy to the eternal Idea. In fact this philosophy, which offers such a profound investigation of the development of self-conscious selfhood, ends by negating self-conscious human self-hood as such. In the same way, this most historical of philosophies ends by negating history as such. It is not simply that mere finite selfhood and mere history are aufgehoben at the end of the process: what becomes explicit in this culmination is just the knowledge that they have never had any truth.

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[1] This is not the place for me to try to spell out my own understanding of "event"; here I can only suggest the reasons for rejecting the view of "event" which seems to me to follow from Hegel's program. I do not mean, however, that a new "factor" is "added" to "factors" immanent in the past. An event is not constituted in this additive fashion. It is a unity, an "organism" (again, in Whitehead's sense) which is new as a whole and not simply as a sum of its "parts".

Time, of course, is not cyclical for Hegel. History has an absolute beginning and (at least in principle) an absolute end. Yet, paradoxically, the result of this philosophy is quite similar to that of the cyclical view of time. History moves from a beginning to an end, but the end is implicit in the beginning.

At the end, indeed, it becomes possible to construct a Philosophy of History, self-referential as any true philosophy must be on Hegel's terms, in the sense that it becomes possible to see the necessity of the whole movement of history which culminates in this outlook. History itself can in fact be incorporated in the total self-referential System, in which its necessity is established in its categoreal relation to the whole. But this means that history's _events_ are only accidental media; the reality of history is not found in its events, but in that which is fundamentally unhistorical.

This consequence is evident in the treatment of Time in Hegel's _Enzyklopädie_: The position of Time in the System is highly significant. Time is not discussed in the Philosophy of Geist, where historical events receive such treatment as is thought to be due them, or in relation to the Philosophy of History. No, Time is treated in the first sections of the Philosophy of Nature! It is treated in relation to Space, as a form in the sphere of being-outside-itself (_aussersichseins_). Time emerges with the appearance of a self-negating element within the definition of Space, namely the "point". Space is the undifferentiated form of being-outside-itself. The point, however, introduces an element of differentiation developed into further geometrical forms, the line and the plane. But this differentiation provides the transition to Time, because this negativity (the point) can express itself not only in contemporaneous plurality, but in succession as well. Now, the important thing to be noticed in this difficult transition is that Time is a succession of points, as Heidegger says, "now-points". Is Time, then, an empty receptacle, independent of the events which give it content? No, at least not in an abstract sense. Hegel denies that things come to be and pass away "_in_ time", as though there were an "empty Time" "for itself" from which all that which fills it could be abstracted. Rather

> Time is itself this becoming, coming to be and passing away, it is the existing fact of abstraction das seiende Abstrahieren , the Chronos which gives birth to all and destroys its progeny.[1]

Hegel is referring, of course, to the negativity of time, with which we are familiar. "The real" is both "different from time" and yet "essentially identical with it" in the sense that the real is as such finite, limited, and therefore "transitory and temporal" - temporality is of its definition. Yet this identity of the entity, the event, with time is equivocal, dialectical, because time as negativity is the "Chronos" which gives birth to it and destroys it. Time, that is, is not the succession of things coming to be and passing away; but Time is the coming to be and passing away of things - the fate to which things are subject, which gives them their hour and then destroys them. Is time, then, an independent and substantive power in itself? By no means! The eternal Notion, Idea, Geist, is "the power of time", is in fact as we have seen the absolute negativity into which time itself is aufgehoben. The eternal Notion, of course, is not outside time; it is in time, but as the Reason which rules the world and into which time is dissolved.[2]

Time, that is, is understood in an essentially spatialized way, as a procession of moments enclosed within a structure of quantitative regularity. Only so is it the inexorable coming to be and passing away to which all things are subject. But this quantitatively determined becomingness which is time is itself only the externality of which the Idea is the inner truth. That is why the implicit _must_ become explicit, and that is why persons and events have no power to produce anything of genuine significance except what _is_ implicit. And - to exhibit the same principle in a different light - that is why alienation _implies_ reconciliation, by a necessity immanent in the alienated status itself.

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[1] Enzyklopädie, § 258 Zusatz.

[2] Loc. cit.; see §§ 254-259. The treatment of time in these paragraphs in its relation to Geist is brilliantly discussed by Heidegger in Sein und Zeit (Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag, achte unveränderte Auflage, 1957), § 82. Heidegger treats Hegel's doctrine of time as "the most radical" form of "the vulgar understanding of time", i.e. time as the quantitatively differentiated succession of "nows", after the model of the clock. He then shows how Geist is the original and effective power of time, "within which horizon 'history' can 'appear' as happening within time".

One can therefore perhaps best approach the question, whether Hegel's dialectic of alienation and reconciliation is an adequate statement of man's situation, by asking whether "time" as thus understood is really men's time, historical time, the time which constitutes our temporality. Am I really borne, brought to a presupposed accomplishment, threatened, destined to be destroyed, by a becomingness which is time? Or am I myself, as a bodily, thinking, acting, willing, deciding existent in my relationship to other real entities - men, animals, microbes, soil, sticks, stones - the sole subject and reality of my becoming? Are we together, in our collisions, our mutual absorptions, our crusades, our use of one another, etc. etc., the very stuff and substance of time? According to this second view it is not time, not becoming, which killed Lincoln, but Booth's decision, Booth creeping into the theater, Booth shooting his gun. The decision, the bullet fired, the dead president, are the stuff of history; time is the succession of events, the events are not the creatures and victims of time, of Chronos. As such history is not shaped by a single immanent Idea but by its own events; the events are the substance, not the accidents, of time. Even in nature there are events, and not _merely_ recurrences or developments along strictly patterned lines. But in history proper, as the succession of events determined in part by the self-conscious acts and decisions of men, the autonomy of the world comes into its own, for better or for worse. If the result has been the conflicts, the unfulfilled longings, the self-rending which Hegel has described with such sensitivity, it nevertheless does not follow that these belong to the category of "alienation", the categoreal nature of which implies "reconciliation". It may well be that the moral crisis which men have created does not have a "moral" solution, cannot be resolved merely by a new and better decision. But does it follow that the solution must therefore be contained in the ontology of the situation, indeed that time itself, in virtue of its ontological depths as the medium of the Idea, must necessarily bear history to ultimate solution? Is it really impossible, in the nature of the case, that we should be ultimately torn apart and should ultimately perish? If this really is impossible, then has not all seriousness been removed from our acts, our decisions, indeed from history itself? Of course the absolute Idea can heal the wound if - but only if! - it has itself inflicted it through the medium of time, if the infliction of the wound is a necessary moment in its own movement toward self-actualization. But can it do justice to the experience of historical man to be told in this way that he is a babe being rocked, if somewhat roughly, in the secure lap of the Absolute? Is not such a confidence, such a "courage to be", precisely the all-too-tempting evasion which threatens modern man?

At this point, however, my rhetoric has carried me perilously close to still another easy dismissal of Hegel's doctrine. The "crisis" nature of our situation, where every peace is a threatened peace, an uneasy peade, bulks so large in the consciousness of our generation, while on the other hand a certain bold activism is so much part of its ethos, that we are apt to consider such a harmonistic vision positively immoral, or at least the illusion of quieter times. But the napoleonic era was not a time of innocence and quiet; Hegel's doctrine of reconciliation was not simply a product of an idyllic age. It was as "counter-empirical" then as now, and is as little subject to "empirical" refutation now as it was then. If we have been more than usually pricked by the hard, sharp edges of "events", this may only prove that our preoccupation with crisis-event and consequent rejection of a dialectic of alienation and reconciliation stems mostly from the limitation of our own historical perspective. There is no proof that "events" are the irreducible stuff of reality, however decisive they may appear to us.

Without overlooking the unique features of Hegel's dialectic, it must nevertheless be recognized that his vision of things has affinities - acknowledged by Hegel himself - with a perennial vision. Even his view of salvation as identity with God, in which standpoint one is aware that things in their immediacy and their evil are not ultimately real, belongs to a persistent spiritual tradition. Not only in Eastern mysticism, but within the Christian Church itself, there have always been men, honored for an often quite unusual sanctity even while viewed uneasily by clerics and theologians who did not share their vision, with whom Hegel could justly claim a special affinity; even though of course their orthodoxy does not necessarily stand or fall with his. Within the influence of neo-Reformation theology such a doctrine of divine-human harmony is not popular. Luther the Reformer broke with his earlier mysticism, and Lutheran and Calvinist theologians looked upon the mystics with more than the usual suspicion. Yet these theologians, and certainly my own sectarian father, John Wesley, believed firmly in the inspiration, the indwelling, of the Holy Spirit, as indeed they had to in obedience to scripture. But it is doubtful that the Holy Spirit can be directly translated by Hegel's Geist, and even more doubtful whether substantial identity with God - at least the God of the Old and New Testaments - is consonant with Christian teaching or with any human experience.

For the Christian the decisive questions in relation to this tradition, as in relation to any theological claim, are christological. How is reconciliation, or salvation understood in such terms, related to the person and work of Jesus Christ? Only after more closely examining Hegel's answer to that question can we reach a clearer assessment of Hegel as a Christian philosopher.

V. HEGEL'S AUFHEBUNG OF THE POSITIVITY OF THE GOSPEL

We have already discussed "positivity" in its categoreal features in some detail, and have encountered the special problem of the positivity of the Gospel at several points. For example, we have noticed Hegel's difficulties in dealing with the positivity of the doctrine of God as Creator, as the God who is and who acts. In this chapter we must drive to the center of our problem, to discuss Hegel's treatment of that which in the Gospel witness is God's decisive act. I begin with a closer examination of the place of "positive religion" in general.

i. Positive Religion as an Indispensable Moment in Absolute Knowledge

We saw in the first chapter how Hegel originally encountered the problem of the positivity of the Gospel, against the background of kantian and Enlightenment presuppositions: as the conflict of the authoritarian givenness or the historical particularity of the Gospel claim with the universality of rational truth. We also saw in that chapter how Hegel moved gradually to a more polemical relationship toward the Enlightenment and toward Kant, and to a more sympathetic assessment of positive religion. In his mature thought he rejects the Enlightenment's "natural religion", and repeatedly attacks the abstract moralism and universalism of its religious ideas. The truth of religion is indeed the absolute truth, but this truth is not to be found in abstract ideas or in the thin broth of universal human experience ladled by abstraction from the concrete events of men's lives in history. The truth which it is the task of the Philosophy of Religion to expound must be found in its historical concreteness, and that means in positive religion.

But the role of positive religion - of the Gospel event in particular - is complicated in Hegel's philosophy, because almost all of the tensions and ambivalences of his thought are reflected in his treatment of it. Just because it is so close to the center of Hegel's concern, the problem of positive religion is a focal point of these tensions. In particular, the Gospel claims that there is an historical event, or configuration of events, which not only shapes all history, but is actually supra-historical in its origin and outcome. Now, Hegel accepts that judgment! As Löwith says, "The history of the world is to Hegel a history B.C. and A.D. not incidentally or conventionally, but essentially".[1] The Incarnation in Jesus Christ is for Hegel at once history's decisive turning point and the basis for the interpretation of history as a whole. But this means that all the problems raised by his philosophy of history are brought to a boil in his interpretation of this event. We have seen that Hegel is the most historically-oriented of philosophers, yet ends by calling radically into question the ultimate authority and even the authenticity of history as such. Naturally this tension becomes most taut in the treatment of this "center" of history.

We must call to mind that Hegel's philosophy is a posteriori in its order of knowledge. Philosophy can treat only what has the power "to force itself into existence", only in its "appearance in outward reality" can the essential become known (see Chapter II, § ii above). Consequently, as we saw in the preceding chapter

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[1] Karl Löwith, Meaning in History, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), p. 57.

(IV, § iv), philosophy always comes too late, is always after the fact. Philosophy can comprehend the essential truth embedded in the facts, can grasp this truth in its genuine form, but cannot itself produce this truth or basically change it. So it is, in preeminent degree, in philosophy's treatment of religion. The positive religions provide the indispensable media for knowing God, i.e. for bringing man to ultimate reconciliation with God. Therefore, if the Philosophy of Religion is to grasp the real religious truth, it must begin at the concrete source.

> We have first of all not religion in general but positive religion, of which it is acknowledged that it is given by God, rests on a higher authority than the human, and therefore appears elevated outside the realm of human Reason.

The wary will immediately become suspicious at the utterance of the little phrase "first of all" (zunächst), since this phrase commonly heralds dense layers of triads to come, into which that which is said in the sentence will be aufgehoben beyond recognition. Of course Hegel is not going to stop with the catechism. The content of the positive religion must be grasped by Reason; and therein lies a problem, since positive religion is given from "outside the realm of human Reason" - at least "first of all". It is clear, though, that Reason cannot itself generate the truth of religion. If religion were not "given by God" it could not be grasped. But once given, it must be reconciled by Reason to itself. Hegel continues:

> . . . comprehending knowledge comes and must come into relation with positive religion, because such knowledge, if it is to be genuine, consists only in the comprehension of the content of religion.

Hegel acknowledges that this relationship has been denied by advocates of positive religion and free philosophy alike. Positive religion has been set into a special compartment, insulated and inviolable, and as such either respected or despised but never discussed in relation to anything else. Philosophy has likewise insisted on going its own way unrestrained by any relation, intrinsically affirmative or negative, to positive religion. Positive religion has been so completely set to one side that

> the results of philosophical investigation can neither make the claim to stand in agreement with the revelation of religion, nor to stand in opposition. We do not wish to put our investigation into this position. On the contrary, we assert an essential relationship between rational knowledge and religion. . . . Reason is just as much a divine revelation as is the representation in religion, and it is false to suppose that faith and Reason are able to stand independently beside one another if their content is in opposition. . . . The human Geist is not so divided in its innermost nature that it can contain two kinds of things which are contradictory.[1]

Now, as Hegel remarks, this is good Medieval church doctfine (at least until the "decline" into nominalism). While this view would not be equally congenial to the Reformation tradition, with its distinctly lower estimate of reason, however, it should be pointed out that when Hegel asserts that Reason is a divine revelation he does not mean that human Reason has an independent divine content of its own. He means rather that it is a divine gift, just as the content of special revelation is a divine gift, and therefore the two cannot go their separate ways into possible contradiction. If both are divine gifts, then the representational content cannot be treated as though it were simply incommensurable with Reason, which can alone provide its adequate form. But Reason cannot as such - i.e. as a distinct realm - generate the divine content; the divine content is given ("first of all"!) "outside the realm of human reason".

For example, Reason can grasp God's own nature. But it is possible to know Geist "in itself" only because Geist has appeared "for itself" and "in and for itself" in history. Theologically stated: because God is known in His Providence, it is possible to know Him as He is in Himself, and indeed a duty is laid upon us to do so. When Hegel speaks of this historical self-revelation, he does not have in mind primarily a "general Providence" in "general history", but the historical manifestation of the divine in the Christian religion.

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[1] Ph. der Religion, I, pp. 54-55.

> In the Christian religion God has revealed Himself, i.e. He has given men to understand what He is, so that He is no longer a concealment, a secret. This possibility to know God lays upon us the duty to do so; and the development of thinking Geist which has proceeded from this basis, from the revelation of the divine Being, must finally proceed to grasp in thought that which has at first been exhibited to the feeling and representational Geist.[1]

The revelatory, saving events of the Gospel are accepted as objective - i.e. genuine - facts, in which one must sink oneself in order to find the absolute Truth and in order to be reconciled, redeemed in that Truth. These saving events are historical facts alongside all other historical facts, yet they are decisive in a sense that no other historical facts are decisive. All history is interpreted in the light of these events; Hegel discovers the clue to the whole in them. And the absolute trans-historical Truth is made manifest in these events as well, must have been so made manifest or it could not have been known at all. So the positivity of the Gospel, far from being its scandal as it had been to Hegel in his youth, now becomes the necessary condition for the Gospel's revelatory and redemptive power.

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, I, p. 45 (Sibree Tr., p. 15, though with considerable variation from the text of the critical edition). This view is remarkable both for its agreements and its disagreements with Reformation doctrine. Luther, for example, would have been pleased to have had it said that God is known only in His self-revelation in history. But he would have pronounced anathema upon the suggestion that one could move from this historical manifestation to the knowledge of the inner being of God. Luther's paradox, that God is Deus absconditus precisely in being Deus revelatus, is quite foreign to Hegel.

At the same time, the positivity of the Gospel must go the way of any other positive feature in the dialectic of alienation and reconciliation: The "absolute religion" is a positive religion, in the sense that it comes to man from outside himself, i.e. "in the sense that everything which exists for consciousness is an objectification to consciousness. Everything must come to us in an external way." Like sensuous objects, or legal statutes, it is given in authoritarian or external fashion. But while this external givenness is decisive in the order of discovery, it constitutes only one side of the ultimate dialectic of freedom - the side which must be aufgehoben! A truth - natural, moral, or theological - becomes essential for us only

> if it is regarded by us not merely externally, because it is so, but is also regarded inwardly by us, is regarded by our Reason as an essential, just because it is itself also internal, rational. Its positivity doesn't at all take away its character as rational, and therefore as our own. The Laws of Freedom always have a positive side, a side of reality, externality, contingency, in their appearance. . . . That which is positive as such in its nature is irrational. It must be determinate, and determinate in a way that has rationality contained in itself.
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> This side is also necessary in the revealed religion; since it is an historical, externally appearing occurrence, it is also something positive, contingent, which could be one way or another way. . . . But . . . The Law of Freedom is not to be regarded simply because it is, but because it is a determination of our rationality itself. If it is known as such, then it is not merely positive, not something externally valid. Religion also appears positive in the whole content of its teaching. But it is not to remain so; it is not to be an affair of mere representation, mere rote.[1]

Reason burns behind itself the bridge by which it has crossed to the land of Truth. While the original medium of knowledge is always positive, external, immediate, knowledge cannot ultimately be acceptable to Reason in this form. For Freedom, Reconciliation, Absolute Knowledge, imply that the subject himself must become the absolute Truth which he knows. It must be his own, he must be "at home" in it, i.e. its rational necessity must be a truth for his consciousness. To apprehend the necessity of the truth in consciousness meant for Hegel that consciousness of the truth has become identical with self-consciousness. Therefore it is demanded by the dialectic of alienation and reconciliation that all positivity must be aufgehoben, as we have seen - including the positivity of the Gospel.

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[1] Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 19-21.

To grasp the Truth which is first presented in positive form, in such a way that it is necessary, transparent to Reason, requires that the apparent immediacy of the Truth must be shown to be mediated. It must be known, not merely as something given, dropped as it were inexplicably into existence, but as a necessary result, a logically mediated result. Of course, as Hegel points out, the Gospel events have always been regarded theologically as a kind of result. They do not happen accidentally, but according to the divine predestination. However, that these events were divinely predestined has generally been held simply as an article of faith; Luther and Calvin, whose allegiance to the doctrine of predestination is well-known, nevertheless opposed in principle any attempt to probe into the divine nature in such a way that the necessity of these events could be demonstrated. However, to stop short of such demonstration would for Hegel mean throwing over at the most essential point the basic canon of his dialectic of reconciliation. The immediacy of the Gospel must be shown ultimately to be mediated.[1] Such demonstration is possible for Hegel, of course, by means of his doctrine of the first moment as the ground of the whole dialectic, his doctrine of Geist in itself which I discussed in Chapter III. It is the genius of the hegelian System that it is in this way both a priori and a posteriori - and not merely in the trivial sense that it contains both a priori and a posteriori elements. The System is a posteriori in that it is dependent on empirical and historical sources. But these immediate, positive sources are declared (or discovered!) to constitute the second moment of the dialectic! As opposed to the first moment they are estranged, but as involved in this dialectic they are logically necessary, determined by the Idea. This logical necessity, which is implied by the first moment as ultimate ground, is in principle accessible to human consciousness because of the implicit identity of divine and human Geist. It is man's true nature to be ontologically (if not psychologically) identical with the ground which gives the apparently accidental its necessity, the apparently immediate its ultimate character as mediated. Because of this ultimate ground, and man's implicit identity with it, it becomes possible in principle to transcend the positive form in which the Truth becomes explicit for us, and to possess this Truth in its necessity as "our own".

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[1] Ibid., I, pp. 70-71, 80-81, 90-96, 183-184 et passim.

Before we go on to pursue these central considerations in relation to Hegel's treatment of the Gospel, let us pause a bit to notice a couple of more general implications, in Hegel's treatment of religious history:

First, even though in the Christian revelation the absolute Truth is made known, and the absolute reconciliation of man and God is effected in principle, there still remain estrangements because of the positive form in which this revelation and reconciliation is produced. Positivity as such implies estrangement.

The estrangements cannot be entirely overcome until that which is effected in the Gospel events becomes man's own, not merely in the sense that man must believe in it, but in the sense that it must be incorporated in its necessity by man's Reason, i.e. must lose its positive form. That is why it is possible for Hegel to play the game of now-you-see-it-now-you-don't on which I commented earlier. Hegel sees Christian history as a progressive process of overcoming these estrangements, of gradually divesting the Christian vision of its merely positive, authoritarian form, and finally even of the opposition between man and God, until the absolute Truth of the Gospel is realized in and for itself in modern Protestantism.[1]

Second, it now becomes possible to discover essential continuities in the history of religion as a whole, to relate Christianity to other religions. The various historical religions are not treated as radically incommensurable with one another, as an irreducible plurality. Nor is Christianity related to the others simply as the true to the false; rather, it has grasped in fullness what the others have grasped with more or less of inadequacy. The criterion is relative adequacy or inadequacy to the Idea. Yet, in dealing with the continuities Hegel neither adopts the popular procedure of showing certain doctrines and moral teachings to be common to several or all religions; nor does he, like Schleiermacher, point to a common psychological substratum common to the religious experience of all. Nor does he treat all religions as merely accretions on one basic religion, the elucidation of which renders the discussion of positive religions superfluous; the great bulk of the lectures on the Philosophy of Religion is devoted to quite detailed discussions of the historical religions on more or less their own terms. Nor does one find the generous wisdom of Lessing's Nathan, who appears to believe that the truth is somewhere in these religions, but is sure that at least for the time being one can't know just where it is (in the parable of the three rings). No, Hegel's handling of the variety of religions is quite extraordinary, and demonstrates again the subtlety of his historical dialectic. Because there is a single Idea, or Weltgeist, moving through all history and through all religions in particular, Hegel is able to find a necessary continuity in the various positive religions. But only on the standpoint of Christianity can this continuity be seen! The Idea has fully made itself known in Christianity and then has become transparent to Reason in philosophy: therefore it is possible to treat the religions in a serial order of more or less adequacy to the Idea, an order which is not a mere classification in the light of an ideal, but which implies a necessary movement from one to the other. Indeed, the Idea - which is to say, the content of the Absolute Religion! - is implicit in every religion. But only implicit! The actual life of the other religions may be qualitatively quite different, possibly altogether different, from the Christian religion.[1] So Hegel's program does not in the least depend on showing that there are common features or direct foreshadowings. It happens that there are, according to Hegel, such foreshadowings - even of the reconciliation of the divine and human natures into a unity![2] But the order, the necessity, the continuity, is not based on any such observations - since Hegel is not blind to the qualitative distinctions involved even in the most obvious similarities - nor on any general "religious" grounds, but on that which is revealed in the specific Christian revelation itself, as refined by speculation. This is a point of great importance: it is the specifically Christian logos alone which reveals a pattern of genuinely divine activity in the non-Christian religions. It is indeed this same logos which reveals the pattern of divine activity in culture in general, however "secular" it may appear.

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[1] The last two parts of the lectures on the Philosophy of History are devoted above all to explicating this process, and constitute the clearest explication of it that Hegel gives us.

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[1] Ph. der Religion, I, pp. 71-76.

[2] E.g. in Egyptian and Greek religions; Ph. der Geschichte, II, p. 486, III, pp. 572-573, 579-580 (Sibree Tr., pp. 218, 239, 248-250). Of course, these continuities receive their massive treatment in the lectures on the Philosophy of Religion.

But the unique event which makes Christianity the Absolute Religion is of course the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. From this general consideration of the positivity of the Christian religion, we shall now turn to Hegel's treatment of this most positive core and key to all the rest.

ii. Hegel's Interpretation of "the Fullness of Time"

The truth of man is his identity with God, but this truth has been only implicit throughout most of history. In order for this identity to become explicit, as a determinant of man's self-consciousness, the distinction between God and man must first be posited. For the man who does not know God as the infinite which stands in opposition to his own finitude is still totally absorbed in the merely finite, even in his religious life. The opposition must be posited before it can be aufgehoben. The infinite must be an object of a man's consciousness before it can become the determinant, the explicit subject, of his own self-consciousness. Hence the religions which precede Christianity have steadily developed man's consciousness of the infinite God standing in radical contradiction to all that man himself is and does. Necessary as this development is, it deepens man's unhappiness. The stark opposition of God and man, good and evil, pitches man into the deepest abyss of misery, subjects him to the most excruciating tension of self-alienation. Man knows himself as impotence in the face of the Almighty, evil in the face of divine Purity. The religions, which have brought him to this abyss, have also created in him the deepest yearning that these oppositions be overcome.[1] And they are.

> The concept of the preceding religions has purified itself into this opposition, and because this opposition has manifested and exhibited itself as an existing need, it has been expressed in this way: "*but when the time was fulfilled*, God sent His Son" (Gal. 4:4). That means: When the need for Geist came into existence, Geist manifested the reconciliation.[2]

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[1] See Chapter IV, § ii above. Hegel provides an admirable summary of this developing tension in *Ph. der Religion*, I, pp. 118-121.

[2] *Ph. der Religion*, I, p. 121. This quotation from Galatians is one of four which Kühler cites as those Hegel most liked to use, for reasons which are fairly evident in each case. The other favorites are: "The letter kills, the *Geist* makes alive;" "God is Geist, and those who worship Him must worship Him in Geist and truth;" "Geist will lead you into all truth." (Otto Kühler, *Sinn, Bedeutung und Auslegung der heiligen Schrift in Hegels Philosophie* (Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1939), p. 89.) Hegel liked to quote scripture, especially at decisive points, and these texts in particular do turn up many times. Kühler complains, with some justification, that Hegel's use of scripture is lacking in exegetical integrity. He generally uses it to supply proof-texts - carefully selected - in support of his own points.

Hegel did value scriptural exegesis, though he expressed the suspicion that one generally learns more about the expositor than about the Bible from the attempts to pursue it. He complained in particular about the patent distortion of scripture in the exegesis of Enlightenment scholars. However, even though he valued the Bible as a guide and a restraint, it is clear to him that one must go beyond exegesis - since "the letter kills etc."! The "Geist" which "makes alive", of course, is fulfilled in Philosophy. See *Ph. der Religion*, I, pp. 37-39; *Ph. der Geschichte*, III, pp. 742-743 (Sibree Tr., p. 331).

Hegel has good reason for emphasizing the first half of the quotation from Galatians: He thinks he knows, through his historical dialectic, just why God "sent His Son" at the particular time He did. Human self-consciousness must be made ripe before the reconciling work can occur.

For example, even though the Greek Geist made some advances toward the fullness of time, the time was not yet fully ripe because freedom for the Greeks took the form of personal idiosyncrasy, was not yet subjected to unity of substance, freedom in its objective universality. This limitation of the Greek Geist is manifest in the fact that its spirituality appears in the intrinsically plural form of natural media - in the form of art and idolatry - and imagination. The Greek Geist is beautiful and spontaneous, but for that very reason neither the substantiality of the universal nor the opposition between universal and particular, one and many, can come to self-consciousness in it. Roman regimentation was necessary to accomplish that development. With the Romans the State becomes a kind of fate, a single overwhelming power which rules the destinies of men and reduces them to mere atoms, parts of a whole, ignoring the particularities of their personalities. Under the Romans, freedom becomes substantial, objective, i.e. becomes the predicate of the universal, though with the total loss of merely individual freedom. This crushing oppression, terrible as it is, can be seen - after the fact, of course - to be the discipline which prepared men to receive the ultimate reconciliation of one and many, universal and particular, infinite and finite, in Christianity. The Incarnation is the telos toward which the world was being "drawn" in this oppressive discipline.[1] Now, though still in an outward form, the pain of the basic opposition enters consciousness: the power of the State becomes the universal substance of men's lives, of which they are mere accidents, non-entities.

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, III, p. 727 (Sibree Tr., p. 320). "Zucht" (discipline) is derived from "ziehen" (to draw). What might the shape of German philosophy have been had it not been for the German language?

All that remains is the internalizing of this opposition into consciousness of the self as a negation of itself, divided, sinful, set over against the true and the good in an infinite opposition. This development is accomplished in the Jewish people, which thereby becomes world-historical. Now that the opposition has become infinite, the stage is set for the stroke in which the identity of God and man shall be manifested to human self-consciousness, i.e. shall become explicit, in and for itself. Before the opposition had reached this excruciating pitch, these terms had not even been posited in their truth - God and man, finite and infinite, good and evil, etc. The positing of these terms in their infinite opposition has occurred in an historical process; now that they are posited, the time is fulfilled and the infinite reconciliation of the infinite opposition is manifested to self-consciousness: i.e. God sends his Son![1]

In the historical context which we have been discussing, Hegel says that the fulfillment of the time for this sending of the Son

> . . . means that the consciousness of the spiritual world has raised itself to the moments which belong to the Notion

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, III, 720-730 (Sibree Tr., pp. 318-323). For more material on the development of this theme in relation to the Greeks and Romans, see ibid., III, 579-580, 661, 674-675 (Sibree Tr., pp. 249-250, 278, 289).
The timing was apposite in another sense, too, since by this time the philosophical background had reached a stage in which the Gospel could be appropriated in rigorous dogmatic form. Ibid., III, 741-743 (Sibree Tr., pp. 329-331).
Along this same line of historical reasoning, it is interesting to note that Hegel did not consider it an accident that the Christian Idea received its adequate appropriation among the Germanic peoples. Again, the soil had been prepared by the fact that the German Geist is characterized by a peculiar subjectivity which Hegel designates "Gemüth". The Gospel apparently suited this Gemüth in something like the way that Eve suited Adam. Ibid., IV, 780-781 (Sibree Tr., pp. 350-352).

> of spiritual self-consciousness. These are moments in the worldly consciousness, and there is a need for these moments to unite, to be comprehended in truth.[1]

So it is abundantly clear that the "fullness of time" means for Hegel the stage in the historical development of human consciousness which is requisite as the presupposition for the reconciled consciousness. The development is entirely immanent in the human consciousness. Historical events as such have only provided the occasions for this development.

This interpretation of the fullness of time already contains some strong hints, or at any rate raises some strong suspicions, regarding the interpretation of the "coming" of the Son himself. The Son appears necessarily, just at this time. And this necessity seems to inhere in the developing human consciousness, as the "other" in which Geist is progressively effecting its self-actualization. The next moment which is required in this development is the consciousness of God and man as identical, the reconciliation of the opposition. Is the coming of Christ, then, merely the occasion for a step essentially posited by a necessary development which is entirely immanent in the consciousness of mankind in general? But if this is so, is the stage really set - at the "fullness of time" - for anything more than a new teaching, which could after all have been disseminated by a persuasive philosopher or rabbi? Is anything more needed to satisfy the "need"? More particularly, is it the coming of Christ which is really decisive, or the teaching of Christianity, quite independent of whether the historical Incarnation claimed actually occurred or not? Indeed, if the development of general human consciousness is the basic point of reference, can the Incarnation be an historical event in any serious sense at all?

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[1] Ibid., III, p. 723 (Sibree Tr., p. 319). "Spiritual" is here used as a translation of the German word "geistigen". See also Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 149, 185, et passim.

God sends His Son! But there is no "God" apart from the Idea immanent in the developing human consciousness. Does Hegel mean anything more than that a particular man becomes a "world-historical individual" in this immanent movement' And does this "coming of the Son" represent a type of world-denying gnosis for those who "receive" him, precisely the knowledge that the world and its historical events as such have no truth, the knowledge which is the rescue from the nothingness of mere existence? Could this be a possible interpretation of the Gospel? Indeed, is the Gospel's "good news" really the identity of mankind with God? Is this identity of natures the reconciliation which, according to the Gospel, God effected in Christ?

These are some of the questions - and suspicions - we may bring from our discussion of Hegel's treatment of "the fullness of time" to his christological construction. These closely related questions are not entirely rhetorical. If they were, the case of Hegel would not be so instructive for philosophical theology. Hegel sincerely wished to maintain the historical concreteness of the Gospel, to affirm the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth as the historical God-man. But how is it possible to do this in a System in which alienation and reconciliation have become a necessary dialectic within consciousness, in an "ontological type of the philosophy of religion" in which salvation is "return" to the essential identity with God presupposed in sin itself?

iii. Hegel's Interpretation of the Person and Work of Christ

Hegel not only says many orthodox things, but pauses to break a speculative lance against various heterodoxies, especially in relation to christology. He sharply distinguishes himself from Enlightenment theologies and "subjectivist" or "Gefühl" theologies which, he correctly says, have attached little importance to traditional Church dogma. Christ as the Incarnation of God and the second Person of the Trinity has in particular been pushed aside or trivialized; even when Christ has remained vaguely at the center of devotional life, or has been honored as a teacher of singular authority, etc. etc., the unique divine claim has been lost.[1] Hegel plainly intends to redress this disregard of dogma, especially in relation to the person of Christ. He did avoid the popular banalities about Jesus that were used in his undogmatic age to make a show of peace with the Gospel. While Hegel admires Jesus as a teacher, he also knows that if Jesus were only a great teacher he would hardly have been worth so much fuss. Nor is it a Christian standpoint to say that Jesus was sent by God in the sense that other great men have been. Even if one adds that he lived the truth he taught, and was a martyr for it, etc., one has not distinguished him essentially from others, e.g. from Socrates. Hegel is clear that one must go beyond anything that could be said of Socrates, regardless of how much Socrates is to be venerated as a great man.[2] Hegel certainly does not intend to assimilate Jesus to his category of "world-historical individuals" (though his intentions in the matter naturally do not settle the question whether in the last analysis his understanding of Jesus Christ differs qualitatively from his understanding of the world-historical individual). Jesus Christ, he wants to say, is an absolutely unique Incarnation of God. But in what sense is that to be understood?

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[1] Ph. der Religion, I, pp. 44-48.

[2] Ibid., I, pp. 154-155, 169-170; Geschichte der Philosophie (kritische Ausgabe), p. 174 (Haldane Tr., I, p. 71). The comparison of what is said of Jesus in relation to Socrates here with what is said of the two men in the early writings (see p. 26 above) illustrates the really radical change in Hegel's attitude toward the Gospel.

It is not fair to raise this question (and others related to it) in terms of a metaphysical scheme essentially alien to Hegel's, and then to castigate Hegel because he is not able to give an answer in the form dictated by the alien scheme. Of course we are asking whether the Gospel can survive its incorporation into this hegelian dialectic at all, as in another sense we have questioned whether creation and history could survive it. But in order to pursue this question we must approach it in Hegel's own terms, remembering that he claims that his dialectic is primarily derived from the Gospel in the first place.

We recall that the process of reconciliation is essentially the process in which the implicit unity of the divine and human natures becomes explicit. We recall further that the medium in which this process must take place is the medium of thought, rational consciousness, knowledge. Now, the reconciling work of Christ must be understood in these terms; he could not be the divine reconciler for Hegel if his work were understood in other terms. It is man's destiny to know the identity of his own nature with God; but a man cannot know this merely by sitting down and thinking about it on a cool afternoon; even if such an idea should occur to him, he would have no reason to believe that it is true, given simply the immediacies of his own existence. No, as we have seen, the Truth becomes known only insofar as it becomes real, embodied in an immediate fact. The principle holds with respect to the supreme Truth of the unity of the divine and human natures; this implicit unity, which is the Truth of God and man, can become explicit only when it is bodied forth in a concrete event. Nor can this explication constitute the reconciliation of mankind if it appears in a form understood only by people who have been favored by special circumstances of culture, education, etc. It must be universally recognizable. The unity of God and man can become known to men

> . . . in no other way than for this unity to manifest itself in a completely temporal, perfectly common appearance in the world in one of these men - in this man, who at the same time becomes known as the divine Idea, not as a teacher, not only as a higher being in general, but as the highest, as God's Son.[1]

This man must be, immediately, concretely, the God-man. He must embody the "immediate certainty and presence of divinity", since only as "that which is [das Ist] " can the Truth actually exist "for the natural consciousness".[2] Throughout his discussion of the God-man Hegel lays great stress on his contention that this historical Incarnation was essential for man to gain immediate certainty of the Truth. The appearance of the God-man is the Truth in the form of certainty. In order for the Truth "to become certain to men, God must appear in flesh in the world".[3]

Christ, then, is divine in that he perfectly embodies the Idea, the Truth. This fact is essentially what distinguishes him from all others who had been honored in one way or another as divine. These others - e.g. Demetrius Poliorketes, Hercules - are related to him as John the Baptist was (John was also honored as divine), as forerunners who prepared men's minds for the Incarnation in which the God-man unity would be genuinely concrete. But in the story of the teaching, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ the congregation finds absolute adequacy to the Idea.[1] To put it another way: the teacher of the Kingdom of God comes fully to embody his teaching. For the Kingdom of God is not an abstract truth. It means rather that God as abstract Truth, i.e. Geist an sich, passes out of His abstract universality into reality, into the world. It is this process which is embodied in the life of Jesus. Insofar as the Kingdom remains a teaching as such, it remains an abstract idea, the idea of God's realization and individuation in the world.

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[1] Ibid., III-1, p. 131. From Hegel's own manuscript. See also Geschichte der Philosophie (Jubiläum Ausgabe), III, pp. 101ff, 145 (Haldane Tr., III, pp. 2-5, 54).

[2] Ibid., III-1, p. 132. Hegel adds, of course, that "das Ist" is only a moment; it is not the truth in itself, but is the form in which the Truth appears. See also pp. 153-155, 184-185.

[3] Ibid., III-1, p. 141, et passim.

> And so long as the Kingdom of God is presented as a teaching of the divine individual, the divinity of Christ is at first only implicit. The God-man - he is this for Geist only as the process of Geist makes him to be such - has to manifest himself, that he is (and) represents a progress of the Idea, the manifestation of its absolute content, its determination.[2]

The apparent adoptionism of this statement must, again, be judged on Hegel's own terms. God Himself, although "true" is not "real" prior to his manifestation in the world. This manifestation is not merely in a teaching, but in historical events. The divinity of

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[1] Ibid., III-1, p. 185. Jesus was, for example, a greater teacher than Socrates, but his unique position does not rest upon such eminence - which would still place him in the class of other men. He is the Truth in and for itself! That is why Hegel considers the essential christology to be removed from the threat of literary-historical criticism of scripture. Ph. der Geschichte, III, p. 737 (Sibree Tr., pp. 325-326).

[2] Ibid., III-1, p. 156 - from Hegel's own manuscript.

Christ consists in his being this divine manifestation, through the whole course of his life. Insofar as he merely teaches the Kingdom of God, his divinity is still implicit; it becomes explicit in the acts in which he actually is God's passing out of ideal universality into the estrangement of existence, i.e. progressively, in his birth, his suffering and death, and finally in his resurrection which overcomes the estrangement of his existence. This story, indeed, becomes "divine history" in a special sense, "the history of God", "the history of Geist in this peculiar medium, namely the external, common human existence [Dasein]". Yet in embodying this history Christ does not contradict his manhood. "The life of Christ is a natural, ordinary life." Indeed, it is not only the ordinary life of a man, but the true life of man in general. But it is not on this account a myth, but real history.

> Since it is the divine Idea which proceeds through this history, it is not only the history of a single individual, but is in itself the history of real man, who makes himself into the existence of Geist.[1]

At this point the charge is bound to arise, as it has for many of Hegel's theological critics, that for all Hegel's talk about the historical life of Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth in fact has no special significance for Hegel's doctrine of reconciliation, is at best only a symbol of the course taken by the reconciliation, or one man - perhaps the first - in which it was embodied.[2]

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[1] Ibid., III-1, pp. 156-157; see 166-169; I, pp. 111-112.

[2] Otto Kühler is a good representative of this line of criticism: "The biblical Christ is only the first historically significant representation of the constant reality of the Holy Spirit, i.e. Hegel regards the essence and significance of Christ in relation to the Holy Spirit as the decisive potency of salvation - an interpretation in which the deviation from the biblical-Christian teaching is evident without further comment. The christocentric outlook of the Bible is not present in Hegel, indeed is fundamentally eliminated through the one-sided emphasis on the Spirit [Geist]." Op. cit., p. 21. Kühler

Again, I don't think the criticism can be dismissed, but it needs to be more carefully formulated than it generally is. Even though Geist is immanent in the historical process, Hegel does not mean that any man could in principle develop his spirituality or his self-consciousness to the point of being the God-man in the sense that Jesus Christ was God-man; nor does he mean that Jesus himself became the God-man simply in that way. It is indeed clear that talk of God "sending" the Son involves a metaphor which even as metaphor could not be made intelligible in Hegel's scheme; God does transcend any particular event, but does not transcend all historical events together; we do not have a breaking in of one realm on another. One might rather speak of Geist's finding itself, becoming transparent to itself in this event. But Hegel's fondness for biblical language keeps him from making himself perfectly clear on this point, though, as we have seen, such "exegesis" as he supplies on occasion makes the historically immanent character of the process evident. But really he does not attempt to deal with the mechanics of just how this event, this life, occurred.

The point on which he steadily insists, though, is the uniqueness of this Incarnation. He attempts to show that, in principle, there could be only one Incarnation, in one individual human being.

(continued from p. 216) argues that the historical Christ is only used as an example of the Christ-principle, and defends this contention in a careful analysis of the text (19-25, 38-39, 77-80). I think that Kühler has not fully understood how historical Hegel's dialectic really is, how decisive certain events can be in the progress of Geist in the world. I.e. I don't think he has done justice to one side of the ambivalence in Hegel's thought, to which I have called attention. Furthermore, while Hegel's view of reconciliation is Geist-philosophy through and through, Geist does not refer simply to the third Person of the Trinity. This is like saying that a theologian is one-sided in his emphasis on God the Father because he says Christ is divine. Despite these reservations, though, I think the fundamental direction of Kühler's criticism is sound, as will be apparent in the sequel.

It must be in a human being, of course, because only man is implicitly Geist, infinite consciousness. I think it is evident that in Hegel's judgment the identity of God and man could not have occurred explicitly in one man had it not been implicit in all. But the decisive Incarnation of God, in which this identity becomes apparent, explicit for those who believe in it, could not have occurred in all, or even in a few. Least of all could such a unique, revelatory Incarnation have been dispensed with. The unity of man with God must become known explicitly in order to be grasped by all men. But Hegel does not mean that what is to be known is the unity of some abstract, general, collective "mankind" with God. Hegel regards the notion of a divine "mankind" in general, which was so attractive to some of his successors, as a bloated abstraction. There is no such thing as "mankind" in general; if God were identical with that, the concept of God could never be anything but a mere abstraction. Just as the particular as such has not yet authentic reality, neither has the universal as such, much less a mere class of entities such as "mankind". The true universal, God in Himself, attains reality only insofar as it is embodied in an individual, in a single self-consciousness. There is no supra-individual self-consciousness within existence as such, and Geist must be reflected within the self-conscious of an existent; therefore Geist must find itself in the consciousness of an individual, for there is no other subjectivity, no other seat of consciousness. This fulfillment of Geist in its individual "other" is at the same time the appropriation of this "other" as a moment in Geist's own life. The embodiment of the universal in the particular, the infinite in the finite, the Idea in that which is estranged from itself, is at the same time "the absolute transfiguration of finitude". It is "the most beautiful point in the Christian religion".[1]

Beautiful as the point may be, the interpretation Hegel puts on it raises difficulties. Granted that the Idea must become reflected in the finite particular, as its opposite, there is really no reason so far as this self-reflection itself is concerned why it could not attain this self-reflection in several individuals. Granted that only the embodiment of the universal in an individual is the real, surely five individuals or a million individuals are as real - individually, not collectively as such - as one individual. In fact the very purpose of the Incarnation is to bring about just this self-reflection of Geist, or consciousness of the unity of divine and human natures, in all men. However, this consideration does not primarily make Hegel's interpretation of the Incarnation inconsistent, but rather raises wider questions about the context of this interpretation. If the purpose of the Incarnation is merely, in a somewhat inflated sense, didactic, then one might argue as Hegel sometimes does in the passages cited above that the teaching of the unity of God with each man is best made when this unity is bodied forth in a single man. But then the argument is reduced to the principles of pedagogy - divine pedagogy to be sure, but still pedagogy - and could be overthrown if someone could show that it would be pedagogically more useful for several examples to be given. Actually one cannot believe, or does not wish to believe, that this is all that Hegel has in mind. Hegel frequently lets the Gospel carry him away. But then he remembers his idealistic presupposition that reconciliation is fundamentally a matter of knowledge, of the consciousness of the self as one with God, and then the Agnus Dei trails off into the theme of the divine pedagogy.

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[1] Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 133-134; also 137-138, 141-142, 175-178. See also Phänomenologie des Geistes, pp. 527-529 (Baillie Tr., pp. 757-759) and Ph. der Geschichte, III, pp. 735-737 (Sibree Tr., pp. 324-326).
See also the Geschichte der Philosophie (Jubiläum Ausgabe), III, pp. 112-116 (Haldane Tr., III, pp. 15-21), where Hegel takes up the cudgels in defense of the human individuality of the Savior against the docetic reductions of the Gnostics, the Manichees, and other spiritualizing heretics.

At any rate, we have seen that the life of Jesus is divine history, in which God uniquely reveals Himself. In Hegel's interpretation of this history, the suffering and death complete the pattern already established in the Incarnation itself; rather, there is no Incarnation at all without the death. In the Incarnation God goes out of Himself, i.e. his abstract universal nature, into his radical other, into an immediate finite existence. Geist passes into its opposite, becomes divided against itself, external, particular, limited, temporal. This movement is essential in Hegel's doctrine of reconciliation, i.e. estrangement is an essential moment in reconciliation. In this movement, Geist finds its reality, and the finite becomes united with Geist. But it is clear that in order for this movement to complete itself it must reach to the radical extreme of finitude, self-estrangement; otherwise Geist is not fully concrete, the finite cannot be fully redeemed. Geist must drink the cup of finitude to the dregs. The God-man must be "obedient even unto death". When Hegel speaks of death as "the highest peak of finitude" he recalls us to his interpretation of the biblical saying that the wages of sin - of finitude, particularity in general - is death. Only in death is the true nature of finitude revealed, the truth that finitude has no truth. When Geist passes into its opposite in the reconciling work of the God-man, it must pass even into this untruth.

> . . . the highest finitude is not the real life in temporality, but death, the pain of death; this is the highest negation, the most abstract, the natural itself, the limitation, finitude in its highest extreme. The temporal, perfect existence [Dasein] of the divine Idea . . . becomes evident only in Christ's death. The highest abnegation [Entäußerung] of the divine Idea - "God has perished, God Himself is dead" - is a monstrous, horrible representation, which brings before the representation the deepest abyss of estrangement.[1]

That which is estranged from Geist is reconciled to Geist by the passing of Geist itself into this "deepest abyss of estrangement". It is extraordinary how much Hegel's eloquent treatment of this theme reminds one of Calvin's magnificent exposition of the doctrine of the Atonement in the Institutes; i.e. what is extraordinary is how similar it sounds, despite the fact that the fundamental presuppositions of the two expositors are poles apart! Hegel's account does indeed lack an interpretation of the descent into Hell, and God's forsaking and rejection of his Son, but the general line of the hegelian reading could easily be extended to this. Special emphasis is put on the fact that the death of Christ is crucifixion, a dishonorable death in which he is estranged even from the majesty of the state - and in which the dishonor of the state itself is brought to the breaking point. Finally it is shown how this terrible abnegation by God is in fact the ultimate measure of the divine Love, that it is in fact love itself become absolute.[2]

But we must move on. The reader is continually reminded that we shall move on by the references to finitude, externalization, estrangement, etc. in Hegel's text, i.e. to the expressions that designate the second moment in the dialectic. We recall that the extreme of alienation is the basic step toward reconciliatian, the step in which the alienation itself turns into its opposite, in which it negates its own negativity. In his death, this finite particular Jesus of Nazareth, this one in whom is contained the "monstrous unity" of the God-man, is - divested of his finitude. In death, which is the "highest point of finitude", we find at the same time the divesting of all finitude. The temporality, particularity, historicity, finitude, of this man - dies! His negativity is negated absolutely. The absolute negation of Christ's negativity constitutes his resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father. In this form Hegel affirms the orthodox principle that Christ's crucifixion and resurrection are intrinsically related.

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[1] Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 157-158 - from Hegel's own manuscript. Hegel frequently quotes this line, "Gott selbst ist tot", from the second verse of the passion hymn "O Traurigkeit, o Herzeleid", in this connection. The terrible simplicity of this line has caught the eye of more than one philosopher. That fact may have something to do with the revision of the line, in the present Evangelisches Kirchengesangbuch, to read "Gotts Sohn liegt tot".

[2] See ibid., III-1, pp. 155-174, for Hegel's most extensive discussion of the significance of the death of Christ.

By his death Christ manifests the fact that his finitude is only a transitional phase. By his resurrection he manifests the fact that his truth is his universality, his unity with Geist in general. This absolute universality, in which everything which belonged to the particularity of the man Jesus has been "crucified", is Christ's true being. Indeed, it is only at this point that his divinity is fully revealed, that his life as "divine history" becomes really revelatory. Christ's nullification of himself as such was the essential step preceding the advent of the Holy Spirit, i.e. the individual God-man points away from himself as such to his fulfillment in the universal Geist. At this point, which Hegel makes again and again, the resurrected Christ merges into the Geist which animates the congregation - animates it by removing it essentially from the limitations of finitude. To remain fixed at the standpoint of finitude, even to the point of knowing the individual Christ as such to be the Lord, becomes, we recall, the Sin against the Holy Spirit. This does not of course mean that we simply forget about the historical God-man. He has enormous significance - as the one in whom finitude as such was in principle abolished. This is a difficult concept to grasp fully. It is true that the "resurrection" of Christ seems to deny the significance originally attached to the historical Incarnation. But the historical Incarnation, the self-alienating movement of Geist into non-Geist is precisely the decisive point in the reconciliation which overcomes this alienation by absorbing the finite as such. The interpretation is beautifully self-referential. The universality into which the God-man "returns" in his "ascension" to the "right hand of God" is not merely the abstract universality of the Idea; it is the "concrete universality" of the Idea which has passed into its other and has overcome the otherness of the other by a dialectical movement immanent in the very act of its estrangement. Geist no longer simply stands over against non-Idea, non-Geist, the finite; it has overcome the finite by absorbing it as a moment in its own inner life. This "resurrection" constitutes the absolute negativity of Geist itself, which negates not only the "positivity" of the merely given individual life, but negates also the very negativity which is the consequence and nemesis of this positivity. I.e., the resurrection is the death of death. In the ascension to the right hand of God - as it is expressed in "representational" form - the positivity has been purged as such, and the identity of man with God has become fully explicit. Man has lost his positivity, and God his abstract transcendence. They are one.[1] In this "divine history" embracing the life, death, and resurrection of the God-man is to be found the inner secret of the divine word at the fall of Adam: "Adam has become one of us". The truth of Adam, already implicit in his forbidden knowledge and in the estrangement which followed on its acquisition, is the explicit identity of God and man in Christ.[2]

The Church has never regarded the Gospel events merely as something which happened once upon a time. What has been accomplished in Christ is somehow imputed to the Church, and to mankind in general. Showing how this is the case has always been a difficult task of theology, since it has been assumed that man remains a sinner even in his justification. But with Hegel the task is not so difficult since in his view the death and resurrection of Christ has after all abolished the merely finite standpoint according to which Christ and the recipients of his grace are merely separate individuals living at distinct times. Within this finite standpoint, each man has to bear the consequences of his own deeds alone; for one man's goodness, one man's suffering, to suffice for all would be morally indefensible. But it is just that standpoint which has been aufgehoben in the work of Christ. Geist has appeared in its freedom, finite limitation has disappeared. It is in this context that Hegel pronounces the paradox on which we have already remarked, which seems to undo the web which time has spun.

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[1] This exposition has been developed from a number of sources: Phänomenologie des Geistes, pp. 540-548 (Baillie Tr., pp. 774-785); Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 95-96, 159-189; Geschichte der Philosophie (kritische Ausgabe), pp. 173-186 (Haldane Tr., I, pp. 71-76, III, pp. 21-23); Ph. der Geschichte, III, pp. 579ff, 720-742, IV, pp. 849-850 (Sibree Tr., pp. 249-250, 318-329, 392-393).

[2] Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 125-126. See pp. 156-157 above.

> Geist can make the occurrence [of evil] not to have occurred. . . . In the death of Christ the finitude of man has been killed for the true consciousness of Geist. This death of the natural has in this way a universal significance; the finite, evil in general, is annihilated. Thus the world has become reconciled; the world has become divested of its evil through this death. . . . Here the mere knowledge of history ceases; the subject himself becomes drawn into the process. He feels the pain of evil and his own alienation, which Christ has taken on himself in putting on humanity; but through Christ's death this is annihilated.[1]

The death and victory of Christ becomes the reconciliation of all men by being universalized. In it man sees the death of death and sin as such, and the identity of God and man as such, not simply for the individual God-man - he has lost this individuality in his death and resurrection - but for universal mankind.

It is in this sense that the "divine history" in Christ becomes divine pedagogy: to believe in Christ is to believe in the identity of God and man in general, and thus to know one's own identity with God. Necessary as this "sensuous history" of Christ's life has been, it is only the "point of departure for Geist".[2] The sensuous certainty of the divine-human identity in Christ must give way to the attestation of this truth in and for itself in the life of every man, in its intrinsic necessity. I.e., the reconciling work of Christ must be fulfilled in the "outpouring of the Spirit [Geist]". In this movement the Truth is grasped in its intrinsic form, is no longer dependent on "external history" - is no longer merely a positive truth. This is not a denial of Christ: the divine history of Christ indeed points to this, but in Christ's death and resurrection the immediate historical form of the Truth in his life is internally aufgehoben. Now, through the unfolding of Geist, this divine history must be accomplished in every man. Just as Christ has divested himself of his estranged finitude, so must we!

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[1] Ibid., pp. 172-173; also pp. 158-159. See p. 163 above.

[2] Ibid., III-1, p. 194.

> . . . only after the death of Christ could Geist come upon his friends; . . . only then were they able to conceive the true Idea of God, i.e. that in Christ man is redeemed and reconciled: for in him the Notion of eternal Truth is recognized, that the essence of man is Geist, and that only by stripping himself of his finiteness and surrendering himself to pure self-consciousness does he attain the Truth. Christ - man as man - in whom the unity of God and man has appeared, has himself, in his death and his history generally, presented the eternal history of Geist - a history which every man has to accomplish in himself in order to exist as Geist or to become a child of God, a citizen of His Kingdom. The followers of Christ, who combine on this principle and live in the spiritual life as their aim, form the Church, which is the Kingdom of God.[1]

In this way, the actual union of God and man, which was realized in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, passes over into the reconciled congregation which is fulfilled in modern Protestantism. "Given" in Christ, this explicit unity with the divine is appropriated as a rightful possession by the congregation.

So now we have made full circle, and have connected our exposition again with the doctrine of reconciliation expounded in the previous chapter. In the communal life of those for whom the story of Christ is accepted as the adequate representation of the Truth, the realization of Geist has been accomplished in and for itself. This community is the perpetuation, and its life the continual recapitulation, of the divine history of Christ. This function is especially evident in its cultus and its sacraments. For example, Hegel passes over the Protestant objection to the Roman doctrine of the mass as a perpetual sacrifice of Christ, and declares that this doctrine expresses the true form of the spiritual life of the congregation. In the sacrament the truth is expressed that the divine history is not a once-for-all accomplishment, but a perpetual re-enactment. According to Hegel's scrambled version of Reformation theology, what Luther objected to in the Roman mass was only the externality of considering Christ to be represented in the Host alone. This last vestige of the view of Christ as a particular being apart from the congregation is what must be purged. For Hegel's "Lutheranism" centers on the believer's inner possession of Christ as Geist, an internal relation to the Truth as one's own.[1] In the congregation in which positive Christianity is fulfilled, the positivity itself falls away. The Gospel events, by being appropriated, are aufgehoben into the Christian religion.

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, III, p. 741 (Sibree Tr., p. 328); see Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 190-198.

iv. The Attestation of the Absolute Religion in Philosophy

But even with the positing of the Absolute Religion, the System is not yet complete. The dialectic has not yet completed its self-referential circle. Not quite. Another step remains, and in that fact there arises a controversy as old as the hegelian philosophy itself.

Even many theologians who are generally quite scrupulous about reading philosophers before pronouncing them godless are apt to make short work of Hegel merely on the basis of scanning the table of contents to the Enzyklopädie, or any other grand outline of the System as a whole. The reason for such out-of-hand dismissal is the notorious fact that Philosophy stands above Religion, even the Absolute Religion, in the scale of adequacy to the absolute Truth. On the other hand, some might be found who would take comfort in the fact that at least revealed religion stands above natural science, politics, art etc., in fact above everything else but Philosophy. There is a similar cleavage of opinion among those who have taken a closer look. It is well-known that Hegel says, in general, that both Philosophy and Religion contain the absolute truth as their common content; but while Religion grasps this truth in representational form, Philosophy grasps it in the absolutely adequate form, of thought. Theologians friendly to Hegel sieze upon the first half of the statement, the hostile critics stress the second. The former point out that according to Hegel the chief task of Philosophy is precisely to grasp the revealed content of theAbsolute Religion, that Philosophy has no distinctive content of its own beyond that given in religion, that Hegel's philosophy is ruled by central Christian ideas to a greater extent than is the case with any other major philosopher who was not primarily a theologian. The hostile critics retort that these Christian ideas are made into grist for the philosophical mill, that the sense in which they are to be understood is controlled in large measure by the inner logic of the System, that Philosophy on its own principles determines what is true and what is ephemeral in Religion. All these allegations both pro and con are quite consistent with explicit statements made in Hegel's frequent discussions of the relation of Philosophy and Religion.[1]

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, IV, pp. 822-823, 846, 876ff (Sibree Tr., pp. 377, 390, 414-417); Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 208-215.

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[1] Hegel's best treatments of this relationship are found in Ph. der Religion, I, pp. 28-35, 284-302; Geschichte der Philosophie (kritische Ausgabe), pp. 166-221 (Haldane Tr., I, pp. 61-91); Phänomenologie des Geistes, pp. 547-556 (Baillie Tr., pp. 783-797); Enzyklopädie, §§ 384, 571-573. The following discussion will draw on all these sources in interpreting the remarks that are documented in detail.

As an example of a modern theologian friendly to Hegel, Lasson comes first to mind. See his remarks on the relation of Philosophy and Religion, Einführung in Hegels Religionsphilosophie, pp. 1-10, 20-22, 131-134, 146 et passim. Kühler could again serve as an example of one of the more knowledgeable theological critics; see op. cit., pp. 13-15, 35-38, 56-65 et passim. Both "prove" their points by close reference to Hegel's texts.

I do not intend to enter exhaustively into this already much-treated question, because I think the correct perspective on the problem is to be gained in direct continuity with the considerations already discussed above. There is no radical breach between Religion and Philosophy. There cannot be, because "Philosophy" embraces the whole System, including Religion on the very highest level of adequacy to the Idea. Philosophy has no other content than this whole System. That there is also a moment, the final moment, called "Philosophy", within the system, simply indicates the self-referential nature of the total scheme. From the "lower" moments we move finally to Religion, then to Philosophy in which we learn that the movement surveyed was a necessary movement of Geist itself. In fact, insofar as its necessity has been explicated at every step we have always been in the standpoint of Philosophy, at no time more than in the Philosophy of Religion. To be sure, that this course has been surveyed philosophically means that we have brought to it a special key, namely the dialectical logic. But then, this key is not "special" in the sense of having fallen out of the sky into an esoteric realm called philosophy. No, at least in principle, the dialectical logic has been discovered in the content itself. The logic is posited in its necessity only at the end of the course - which is to say that the course has no end in one sense, but is a circle. (See pp. 45-46 above) What "Philosophy" brings to "Religion" is not a new content but simply the environment of a total, necessary System, in which the moments of Religion can be grasped in their necessity. Nor is this necessity foreign to Religion and imposed upon it. We have just seen how the actual, positive content of Religion itself moves necessarily beyond its positivity, in the death and resurrection of the historical God-man.

Therefore Hegel is making a rather rough distinction when he says that Religion grasps the Truth in representational form, Philosophy in thought. Thought is already involved even in the lower religions, e.g. in the Greek religion, but thought is here limited by a natural medium, a statue etc., which remains in certain respects stubbornly opaque to thought. Now, in Christianity there is still a medium, but it is an historical medium, a man in whom - even qua historical - Geist resides at least implicitly. And furthermore, in the death and resurrection . . . but we need not go through all that again. The result of the Absolute Religion is that the positive medium is aufgehoben. The Truth has in principle lost its opacity to thought, has become transparent, universal, in the Geist-determined congregation. Historically, of course, various stages have remained to be realized, moments characterized by the progressive Aufhebung of positivity altogether. Philosophy simply completes this progressive movement. It grows out of Religion, not merely historically but categoreally. When Hegel announces, as he frequently does, that God is the whole object of Philosophy, he is speaking of the God of Religion. Philosophy has no "special" subject-matter all its own. Indeed, the Philosophy of Religion is a special case in the sense that it involves a relation of virtual identity between a discipline (Philosophy) and its object (Religion). The case is not as in geometry, where the discipline is to be distinguished from space, its object.

> On the contrary it must be said that the content of Philosophy, its desire and interest, is completely in common with that of Religion; its object is the eternal Truth, nothing but God and the explication of God. Philosophy only explicates itself when it explicates Religion; and when it explicates itself it explicates Religion. It is the thinking Geist which penetrates into this object, the Truth, and which is the enjoyment of the Truth and the purification of subjective consciousness. Thus Philosophy and Religion combine into one. Philosophy itself is in fact worship [Gottesdienst].[1]

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[1] Ph. der Religion, I, pp. 28-29.

Philosophy, absolute Knowledge, grows in direct continuity with the life of the reconciled congregation; though it is noteworthy that "thinking Geist" is the common factor which provides the basis for the continuity. Hegel adds that of course each of these two, Religion and Philosophy, performs its worship - or service of God - in its own peculiar way. Philosophy is not itself Religion as such. But neither does it simply take up where Religion leaves off; the Philosophy of Religion has been "Philosophy" all the while, even when it dealt with religious positivity. But the dialectic which Philosophy discovers in Religion carries it beyond all positivity and finally beyond the special realm of Religion as such.

Hegel knows that only a small circle within the congregation can follow this dialectic into the clear air of absolute Knowledge, into the realm where the same absolute content is grasped in its absolute form. For most believers the Truth continues to be grasped in a form at least partially tinctured with positivity. This is no disaster for them, since the decisive thing is that they have indeed grasped the Truth (though the line between the positive tincture and the sin against the Spirit is not absolutely distinct). Furthermore, there is in principle no great gulf between their still somewhat representational grasp and the absolute rational grasp of the Truth, since the former leads by an inner dialectic to the latter. By grasping the Absolute Religion in thought, they have implicitly grasped Philosophy as well. That they are not able to follow this dialectic to its conclusion is merely a limitation in their capacity, time, or patience, but does not constitute a qualitative breach between them and their philosophical brethren.[1]

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[1] Of course, one must recall the pessimistic conclusion to the lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, that in the light of the degenerated state which threatens Religion it may have to

In fact, the Absolute Religion finds its ultimate attestation in Philosophy, the authentication of its truth. Why does the Gospel need such an attestation? It needs it because of its positivity.

(continued from p. 231) flee to Philosophy to preserve any truth at all. (See Chapter IV, § iv above.)

A curious mistake is made in this connection, a serious mistake that is curious only because it happens to have been Lasson who made it. In his *Einführung in Hegels Religionsphilosophie*, the editor of the modern edition of Hegel's works seems to suggest that Hegel means the company of philosophers when he says "congregation". Outlining the three stages in the "kingdom of Geist", Lasson lists immediate religion, the "*Verstand*" standpoint of the Enlightenment, and then: "the third stage, the congregation - for it alone Hegel uses the expression 'congregation' - of philosophy". P. 147.

I would not have bothered much with this statement if it had been made by one of the company of scholars which regards Hegel as the anti-Christ; but when it is made by the leading modern defender of the view that Hegel was a philosophical defender of historical Christianity, it seemed worth careful consideration. Lasson is the man who exults in the fact that Hegel always meant the religion of the Gospel when he speaks of the Absolute Religion, Lasson is continually declaring that Hegel meant the faith of the Christian believer, and not an esoteric philosophical sect. Therefore, even though he does not expand on this statement in this work, and even though it accords little with his exposition in the same section of his Einleitung, one is inclined to pursue the question, since it would seem to be an admission reluctantly wrung from him.

The passage which Lasson cites in making this curious statement is in Hegel's *Ph. der Religion*, III-1, p. 232. In this passage the expression "*die Gemeinde der Philosophie*" does indeed appear, and in the context of the same three-fold division which Lasson outlines. But there are two considerations to be kept in mind: First, this is so far as I have been able to discover the only appearance of this expression in all Hegel's works - and it is taken from the lecture notes, not from Hegel's own manuscript. It is certainly not characteristic. Second, it is used in this passage as a summary expression, the meaning of which is ambiguous. It could mean simply, the congregation which is the object of the genuinely philosophical treatment of Religion - i.e. the Christian congregation of modern Protestantism. But if this latter is what Lasson meant, it is certainly misleading for him to say that Hegel uses the expression "congregation" only in this connection. That does not appear to be what he meant.

Lasson seems to give considerable emphasis to this passage. He again discusses "*Die Gemeinde der Philosophie*" in a lecture delivered before the Hegel Kongress of 1931 ("Hegels Religionsphilosophie", *Verhandlung des zweiten Hegelkongresses*, herausgegeben von B. Wigersma, Tübingen, 1932), though again he can cite only the one passage in which Hegel uses the expression. He does defend Hegel against the charge of making philosophy into an ersatz religion. Rather, "Philosophy leads the way straight back again into reality" - back into "the immediacy of the now illuminated Vorstellungen". (p. 191) This is a perfectly correct interpretation, but Philosophy

It is the glory of theGospel that it is revealed; it is clear that Hegel thinks that the truth of God could not be known at all if God had not revealed it. Yet by the very fact of its having been revealed, given to man on the basis of an external authority, it does not belong essentially to man; man cannot grasp it in its necessity so long as he grasps it in the form of revelation as such. He is simply told that it is true, commanded to believe that it is true; he does not know that it is true. He only believes, he does not know, that God has a Son, and further that Jesus Christ is this Son. Hence the need for an attestation (Beglaubigung). Of course, the question of attestation is not the same as the question of immediate certainty. The latter, we recall, is given in the person of Christ; there could be no necessary knowledge, or any knowledge of the truth, without this moment of immediacy, but just because it is immediate it cannot in itself be necessary. Hegel also pays his respects to other traditional attestations, e.g. pious feelings evoked, miracles, the Bible, fulfillments of prophecies. He does not deny any of these, but steadily insists that they cannot in themselves provide the attestation needed, since they are infected with the same positivity as is the original form of the truth to which they attest. Hegel is fond of recalling, in this connection, Christ's rebuke of the Pharisees for demanding a sign. Other texts are marshaled to show that the Truth of the

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(continued from p. 232) must lead back into the "reality" of historical religion because the "congregation" in which the actual reconciliation is accomplished is found within the historical religion and the society penetrated by it. Indeed, Philosophy can grasp this reconciliation in an adequate form of thought only because it has been accomplished there in reality. There is no "congregation of philosophy" as such. "The real congregation is that which we call, generally, the Church." (Ph. der Religion, III-1, p. 207.)

That when Hegel says "the congregation" he means modern Protestant cultus and its society is evident, not only in the lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, but also in the last part of the lectures on the Philosophy of History.

Gospel can be grasped only in an inward, spiritual way! i.e. through Geist's own witness to itself. And the signs of Geist are of course ultimately of the nature of thought, necessary truth, i.e., finally, speculative philosophy.[1] Of course, "thought" cannot mean the alienated calculations of the Understanding, for which the content of religious representations appear to be contradictions or impenetrable "mysterion". But for Reason, i.e. speculative Philosophy, we recall, these mysteries are thoroughly intelligible, seen as necessary truths.[2]

To be sure, the congeniality of speculative Philosophy to the truths of positive religion derives in part from the fact that it accepts this positivity as its source, seeks its rational movements in the "givenness" of these bare "facts". Philosophy is a continuation and completion of "Geist in his congregation". Yet it does after all make an advance on the religious representations, it corrects the inadequacy of these representations. Exactly what is this inadequacy? Much misunderstanding of Hegel has been caused by the tendency to speak of representational thinking exclusively as "picture-thinking", mythical or imaginative or vaguely symbolical thinking and the like. Of course "representation" can take such forms, but these are not its highest forms. In particular, Hegel denies that the Gospel, the message of the life and work of Christ, is to be regarded in a mythical or allegorical way, or anything of the sort. The "history of Jesus" is "not to be regarded as a myth after the manner of pictures, but as something perfectly historical", historical in the "ordinary sense" and also in the sense of "divine events, divine acts".[1] But it is just this historicity, even in the most exalted sense of the term, which constitutes the outer limit of the sphere of Religion as such! So long as the Truth is grasped as something historical it is grasped in a positive form as something given to the believer, a finite form, i.e. an estranged form. Of course the Truth grasped by the Absolute Religion is the Absolute Truth. But so long as it is grasped in a positive, finite form the form is an inherent contradiction of its infinite content. Now, philosophy gives this content its infinite, necessary form, the form of pure self-reflexive thought. Philosophy does not impose an alien form on the Absolute Religion; the Absolute Religion, on the contrary, has imposed the alien form - finitude - on itself. Rather, philosophy grasps the Absolute Religion in the thought-form genuinely proper to the Absolute Religion itself, and thus frees it from its own one-sidedness. The Truth cannot be adequately grasped in a form in which it merely appears in a sequence of events. The eternal Truth knows no serial succession.[2] The real question is:

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[1] Ph. der Religion, III-1, pp. 21-26, 143, 148-149, 183-198; Ph. der Geschichte, IV, 737ff (Sibree Tr., pp. 326ff). One cannot help noticing again the aid and comfort given Hegel by the well-known philosophical richness of the German language. Of course there is a distinction between "geistig" and "geistlich" even in that tongue, but Hegel does not linger much over that distinction.

[2] Ibid., III-1, p. 77; Geschichte der Philosophie (kritische Ausgabe), pp. 209-210 (Haldane Tr., I, p. 79).

> What is the content in and for itself? This content must be justified through Philosophy, not through history; what Geist does is no external history [Historie]. It has to do with what is, in and for itself, not what is past but what is absolutely [schlechthin] present.[3]

So in the last analysis the positivity of religion must be rejected, in content as well as in form if the absolute Truth is to be grasped. This rejection implies nothing less than the denial, finally, that the Truth can be historical - a denial which is of course perfectly consonant with Hegel's treatment of finitude in general. The Truth is received historically, in the order of knowledge, but "in and for itself" it is eternal, in the sense of being radically a-historical.

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[1] Ph. der Religion, I, pp. 111-112; see 110-118.

[2] See especially Enzyklopädie, §§ 565-566, 572-573.

[3] Ph. der Religion, III-1, p. 198.

The "sign of the Spirit [Geist]" attesting to the truth of the Absolute Religion is speculative Philosophy! For speculative Philosophy proceeds in principle without presuppositions, with nothing merely "given"; speculative Philosophy grasps all reality in a self-referential system. If in fact nature and history are used as sources, this does not alter the necessary, apodictic character of the philosophical System in principle; for nature and history become subjects for Philosophy only when their structure and movement are grasped as necessary moments in the self-referential System, i.e. when their truth is seen to be non-natural and non-historical. And only in speculative Philosophy, thus understood, is man finally and fully at home with himself. Now, finally, in grasping the "object" he grasps nothing but his own rational "Notion". How does this follow? How does it follow that in incorporating the Truth in his self-consciousness as a System he grasps nothing but his own Notion? It follows from the fact that he has been implicitly in unity with the divine nature, with Geist, with the Truth - all the while! Only in light of this implicit truth does his knowledge absolutely cease being positive in the final moment of speculative Philosophy. It is thoroughly his own, i.e. it belongs to Reason itself. This doctrine does not deny the indispensability of positive knowledge as a source for philosophy; at any rate it requires only that "source" be understood in a rather special way: historical knowledge, positive revelation, do not give me something I did not have before, implicitly, but they are necessary in bringing this implicit possession to explicit consciousness. Now we are in a better position to understand what Hegel means when he says that Reason is also a divine revelation. There is only one

Truth, and this Truth is implicit in man's nature, in his Reason. Positive revelation brings this same Truth to consciousness. If it were not so, the Truth given in the positive revelation would always be alien to us, merely external, "mechanical". Revelation can only in a superficial sense be said to give the Truth; strictly speaking, it evokes the Truth which has been our possession all the while, implicitly.

> This belongs to the ancient wisdom which Plato pronounced, that man learns nothing, but only remembers; it is something which man bears originally in himself.

Of course Plato stated this in a figurative way. Hegel does not mean that man recalls something that at one time was explicitly in his consciousness.

> . . . Thus it is expressed mythically; but its truth is that religion, right, morality, everything Geistige in man is only evoked [erregt]. He is implicitly Geist, the Truth lies in him, and so it must be brought to consciousness in him.[1]

Again, we recall the principle which Hegel learned from the Greeks, that nothing can become which is not already potential. The common denominator of "religion, right, morality" etc. is Reason, or Geist. To say that man is implicitly one with God is to say that he is potentially rational. Now, the System shows that reality itself is rational through and through. Therefore reality does not stand over against man, as an object. It is his own, bound to him in the nature of Reason itself. Reason, then, as it comes fully into its own in speculative philosophy, must be the attestation of the Christian religion. If "God is Geist", then those who worship Him must do so "in Geist and Truth"! Again, does not Holy Writ say that Geist shall lead us into all Truth? And is it not clear that the "sign of Geist" is Geist in and for itself? - in speculative Philosophy!

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[1] Ph. der Religion, I, pp. 93-94.

This common basis in Reason is the ground for the direct relationship between religion and all other reality, "everything geistige in man". Religion, art, science, politics, morals, all become internally related to one another once their inner secret, Reason, becomes explicit. This explication is again the great achievement of the System. Only on the basis of the System can an internal - in the sense of logically necessary - relationship among all these areas be known with certainty. Anyone who is concerned with the relevancy of the Gospel, anyone who is convinced that God did not intend that the Gospel should be preserved in sacerdotal insulation, can hardly fail to sympathize with Hegel's intent or to respect the magnitude of his effort, even if one is convinced that the whole direction of that effort is fundamentally wrong. To a Protestantism vitiated before and since by mere sectarian enthusiasm and the false pride of grand spiritual isolation the great philosopher offers a vision of the total unity of things under the Gospel, on a scale of integrated grandeur unequaled since the Middle Ages and unexcelled even at the height of Medieval speculation. What St. Thomas accomplished in his hierarchical ordering of all things in heaven and earth Hegel accomplished in his doctrine of the self-identity of Geist in every self-manifestation in heaven or on earth. Hegel's harmonization of all beauty, truth, and goodness, all power and aspiration, in the nature of Reason is one of the most beautiful visions in all philosophy. In this ambitious sense did Hegel take up the vocation of being a Christian philosopher. Religion within its own limits cannot attain this magnificent harmony, because the remaining positivity in its form is a residue of externality and finitude which keep it from grasping the internal relations of things. Speculative Philosophy overcomes this positivity, and in so doing becomes - if not precisely a servant - a benefactor to the Absolute

Religion. Reason does not sit in a monk's cell, vowed to poverty, chastity, and obedience, concocting slavish apologetics for religion. But in its sovereign freedom it loves God in all things, yet it loves only God; and is thus the absolute attestation to all religious Truth.[1]

v. Hegel as a Christian Philosopher

I have attempted in the foregoing to correct some of the cruder charges of "reductionism" as leveled against Hegel from theological quarters. Hegel could fairly deny the claim that he had reduced "Christian ideas", or "Gospel-centered thinking" to an alien "philosophical system". Hegel's reflection on the Gospel is central to the total edifice of his philosophical thinking.

Yet there is after all a reduction which takes place: a reduction of the Gospel event to reflection about this event, a reduction of the redemptive Providence which centers in this event to a philosophical vision of all things which centers in a reflection about this event. But how can such a reduction be avoided? In order to be an object of thought, any event must be reduced to thought; this root-premise of idealism appears to be quite unshakable. One might point out that it is not however necessary to erect a philosophical System in which one's reflection on this event is incorporated. Doubtless there has been an astounding number of people who have lived and died without ever constructing a philosophical system at all, and quite a lot of devout Christians may be included within this great company of the unphilosophical. But this consideration is trivial. The philosopher, even the system-builder, merely does in a more rigorous and perhaps more sophisticated way what everyone does to some degree: he reflects on his experience, on what seems important to him, on his basic convictions. Not every man is a philosopher, but every man tries to make some sense of what he sees and believes; the sense that a person makes of things might not bear close inspection as to consistency, and if he has a certain kind of epistemological sophistication he might refrain from making truth-claims for his point of view, and his point of view may change. But he has one, cannot, even if he will, avoid forming some sort of rudimentary belief-system. A man may be more than a reflective creature, but so long as he remains a man he cannot help reflecting on what he sees, hears, feels, reads, believes. A philosopher differs from other persons only in the degree of critical attention he devotes to his reflections; the kind of concerns he has are universally human, they do not constitute a specific field, such as chemistry or taxidermy, which a person can avoid totally if he wishes. What people is so primitive that it lacks folk wisdom, or at least a view of what constitutes common sense?

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[1] Ph. der Geschichte, IV, pp. 827-830 (Sibree tr., pp. 379-381).

The point is that the Christian, however much he may fume against the devilish effects of "vain philosophy" does have a kind of rudimentary "philosophy", or if you prefer, a world-view, an outlook on the nature of things. He cannot avoid this, and unless he succeeds in insulating his faith to the point of irrelevance from all moral or practical or theoretical concerns, the things he believes in the light of faith will assume a central position in his view of things. Undoubtedly this state of affairs is the source of every heresy, every idolatrous perversion of his faith, but we do live under the threat of idolatry whether we wish to do so or not. He who believes that Christ is Lord does think about this belief, and if he did not relate these thoughts to other thoughts he would be denying, at least within his thought, the very Lordship he professes to affirm. If the necessity of reflecting on what one believes in faith is sin, then it is original sin, from the snares of which the theologian least of all can extricate himself. If this be so, then there is no absolute contradiction in speaking of a "Christian philosopher". He may suffer, to an acute degree, the dilemma of reflecting on his beliefs with a mind which is an "idol-factory", but it is a dilemma he shares with the theologian and indeed with any Christian. The mere fact that he attempts to think more critically and systematically than most people is not in itself damning. A man need not do this in a spirit of heaven-storming pride; he may simply recognize the itch to philosophize as a disciplined use of one of the inescapable, limited conditions under which he exists as a man.

However, any thought has difficulty in dealing with positivity. Positivity is not a class to which things belong, but is a word signifying that which cannot be classified, that which simply is but is opaque to thought. The divine act which is the Gospel event cannot be *thought* at all if it is left in utter positivity. Yet even if one regards it as miraculous (is "the miraculous" a class?) and does not wish to "explain" it logically, one must still have some understanding of what he means when he speaks of a divine act or a saving event. He thinks about it, and in this thought the positivity is already compromised. There is another consequence of his thinking about it: so far as his thinking is concerned, his thought of it will have a priority to the event itself. Now this consideration won't necessarily make him an hegelian, but it ought at least to make him more sympathetic with Hegel's contention that Philosophy must have a logical priority to Religion, even when it attempts to be faithful to the religious reality; since the religious reality can be grasped by the mind only in an intellectually reflected form. A dilemma is faced when the reality is known to be positive, however, since one knows himself to be reflecting about that which, in itself, is opaque to thought, so that every reflection includes a reminder that something, perhaps the essential thing, is lost in the reflection. Indeed, the possibility arises that the positivity of this reality may not be merely an element that reason has not yet grasped, but may be due to that within it which radically transcends reason, is in the very nature of the reality not graspable by reason. Reason may face this possibility seriously, and reduce all its reflections to a merely tentative position resting on foundations which are in the nature of the case perpetually shaking. Or it may dismiss this possibility, treating the positivity in which this possibility resides as an illusion the apparent recalcitrance of which was posited merely by reason's temporary inability to grasp it.

The latter is manifestly Hegel's procedure. Positivity is dissolved in the identity of thought and being, an identity which cannot be proven, however, without being presupposed. Reason is in an awkward position if the presupposition is not made, but this in itself is hardly sufficient grounds for making it. All positivity is treated as a necessary moment in the dialectic, a moment which is estranged from its rational ground, but just because it belongs to the Ground from which it is estranged it must necessarily be reconciled to it. Of the necessity that thought can only think thoughts is made the virtue that thought and reality are metaphysically identical. Now thought is no longer merely the limit under which we exist as thinkers, but the limit of the metaphysically real. What occurs in the Gospel event cannot therefore be the act of the transcendent Creator, but the manifestation of the immanent Notion as Ground of reality, a Notion accessible to our thought.

If this is the case, then the event is no longer "positive". The question is whether it is any longer essential to the reconciliation of man with God at all. If not, then what can it mean to speak of man's being reconciled to God? These are the questions which are fundamental to the consideration of Hegel as a Christian philosopher. His intentions are clear: to treat the Gospel event as the redemptive center of history. But can this intention be fulfilled with logical coherence when the divine reconciliation announced in the Gospel is transposed into a necessary dialectic of alienation and reconciliation? Granted, as I have tried to indicate, that this dialectic has itself arisen out of Hegel's reflection on the Gospel, does it nevertheless dissolve the Gospel in such a way that the fundamental claims of the Gospel are lost?

Of course, there is a development which intervenes, which makes it easier to cope with the stark positivity of Gospel event as such. This development is the Christian religion. By transposing the Gospel into the Christian religion, into the self-consciousness of the members of a community whose devotion is oriented toward the Gospel, the material becomes considerably more pliable for Hegel. Now his fundamental point of reference can be this self-consciousness rather than an alleged divine act in history. The former medium is obviously more congenial, more transparent, to philosophical reason than is the latter, since a rationality akin to the philosophical is inextricably involved in all consciousness; as I argued above, human consciousness cannot avoid being reflective. Therefore, once this transposition has been made, of the Gospel into the Christian religion, Hegel's task becomes manageable, if not easy; he can consider himself, without any necessary self-contradiction, to be both the philosopher of a self-referential System of Notions and the philosopher of the Christian self-consciousness.

If one is disposed to deny that philosophy can have anything to do with the real object of faith, the obvious move at this juncture is to drive a wedge between the Gospel and the Christian religion, between the divine act and the human consciousness which responds to this act. But this is a perilous move. An absolute separation between the divine Gospel and the all-too-human Christian religion would imply a docetic denial that God speaks to man qua man in the Gospel at all. A Gospel which has nothing to do with human consciousness, with mere "religion", can have no power to redeem man at all. The heavens must condense and mix with the common clay, or the earth is not nourished.

The real question is, whether the Gospel can ever be the possession of the Christian religion, assimilated as a quality of the Christian consciousness, without ceasing to be God's own act? In denying, rightfully, the separation between divine act and human appropriation, Hegel has also denied the distinction between them. Who is the real subject or agent of this act of reconciliation? Hegel has reduced this to an unreal question; on his terms it is all the same whether one answers "God" or "man", because this act presupposes the implicit identity of the two and issues in the explicit identity of the two. But if this be the "Truth", then how can biblical faith even be an adequate representational expression of the "Truth"? For it seems quite clear in biblical faith that the movement of the redemptive Word is always from God to man, a Word which remains God's even when it is received by man; for man is related to this Word in the modes of faith and hope, not by right of possession. Insofar as the congregation is characterized by faith and hope, in the biblical sense, it points away from itself; for while faith and hope belong to the congregation, they are paradoxically oriented to that which does not belong to the congregation, but to God. The consciousness of the congregation may nevertheless be a datum for a philosopher, perhaps his central datum, but it is a datum of a most peculiar sort, since this consciousness cannot be self-referential. It could be self-referential, only if that toward which its faith and hope is directed were to be found in the congregation itself. But if the congregation which makes this assumption were the ultimate point of reference for a philosopher, then from the biblical standpoint he could only be the philosopher of the idolatrous consciousness. No doubt, according to biblical doctrine the Spirit dwells in the congregation; but the mode of His dwelling is not such that it would be worth anyone's while to have His name inscribed on the door. There is perhaps a certain divine humor in a church being torn down from disuse, whose plaque proclaims it to be "The Church of the Holy Ghost" or something of the sort. "The Spirit bloweth where it listeth," because it is God's and remains God's.

VI. STRAUSS EXPELS THE GOSPEL EVENT FROM THE SPECULATIVE GEIST

Although I have completed my detailed discussion of Hegel's texts, for the purposes of this essay, I am by no means finished with the problems raised by Hegel's viewpoint. Even though we shall turn, in this and the following chapters, to the writings of a few of Hegel's successors, our concern will still be primarily with the interpretation and evaluation of the treatment of the positivity of the Gospel in Hegel's System. I shall not attempt to present anything like a complete interpretation of the positions of these predecessors, important though each of them is in his own right. I shall attempt merely to show how Hegel's proposal, as discussed above, is developed and criticized among a few of the men who related their thought consciously to his. I do not mean to treat even this theme in anything like a complete historical survey. It would far exceed the scope of this essay to discuss the development and criticism in the small army of self-conscious hegelians and anti-hegelians who flourished during the next few decades.

Our concern will continue to be primarily systematic. The sequence in which the successors will be treated will be determined by the order adopted in my interpretation of Hegel. After the first chapter, in which we observed the development of the issue in Hegel's early thought, we proceeded in three general steps to show how Hegel went about incorporating the positivity of the Gospel into his dialectic of alienation and reconciliation: First, in Chapter II, we discussed the nature of the System, showing how it was intrinsic to Hegel's whole program. In the next two chapters I indicated the centrality of theological themes in this System, showing how the dialectic of alienation and reconciliation is oriented around the theological themes, idealistically interpreted. Then in Chapter V we discussed the way in which Hegel attempted to reconcile the positivity of Gospel event itself with this speculative dialectic.

In this chapter and the two to follow we will retrace these three steps in reverse order with the help of some of Hegel's historical successors, reconsidering each step in the light of further critical considerations raised by these men. First we shall consider the way in which David Friedrich Strauss was led to deny that a positive historical event, the Christ-event, could be intrinsic to the speculative outlook. In Chapter VII we shall see how Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx further attempt to unravel this fabric, by denying the idealistic and theological orientation of the dialectic in general. In Chapter VIII we shall discuss Søren Kierkegaard's attack on the System as such, and I shall indicate briefly the character of Kierkegaard's radical re-orientation of the Gospel through an insistence on its irreducible and irreconcilable positivity.

i. A Young-Hegelian Breaks with Church Theology

Despite the fact that he was relatively unknown up to the last fifteen years of his life, and despite the fact that even during the period of his brilliant ascent he continued to provoke opposition, Hegel went to his death in 1831 enjoying a dominance over the intellectual life of Western Europe that has few parallels. Among his greatest achievements had been his apparent reconciliation of philosophy with church-theology, after these two had been bitterly feuding through many "enlightened" decades. In the opening paragraph of his Glaubenslehre, published in 1840, Strauss suggests to us something of the optimism which had greeted the pax hegeliana ten years earlier:

> The fourth decade of our century opened with days of peace for theology, beautiful and full of hope. The old prophecies by the ancestors of the new philosophy seemed ready to be fulfilled, not only in their original reference to religion in general but also to the Christian religion in particular. The long quarrel between philosophy and religion appeared through a marriage of the two houses to come to a happy result; and the hegelian System was hailed as the child of peace and promise, with which a new order of things begins, a time when the wolves shall live with the lambs and the leopard shall lie down with the goats. Worldly-wisdom, that proud heathen, submitted humbly to baptism and made a Christian confession of faith; whereas Faith, for its part, had no hesitation in testifying that it [Worldly-wisdom] was perfectly Christian, and in earnestly recommending it to the loving reception of the congregation. The theological youth, with cheerful courage, now permitted the adder of doubt to play on its head and breast, certain that it possessed the magic formula with which to banish it; and in the circle of zealous orthodoxy itself one could perceive maneuvers and weapons which had been borrowed from the training-grounds and arsenals of philosophy.[1]

However, as Strauss goes on to say, the peace was soon broken. The hegelian school itself divided into a right and left wing,[2] and at least at the outset the division occurred precisely on the problem of relating faith and knowledge, theology and philosophy.

On the "right" and in the "center" were men who wished, in varying degrees, to preserve the synthesis, to confirm the Gospel history in whole or in part along the original lines of Hegel himself. In footnotes to the selection quoted above, Strauss cites some of these men, Gabler, Göschel, and Rosenkranz. A few, notably Rosenkranz, Erdmann, Michelet, and Marheineke, continued to defend and embellish the synthesis for several decades. But Strauss was already confident that it was a losing game. It was clear to him that from the original optimism, with its affirmation of _credo ut intelligam_, one must move either "backwards to *credo quia absurdum*, or forward to pure knowledge free of faith".[1] Of course, neither right nor left wing advocates would accept the former alternative. Rather, it seemed to those on the right that this radical decision did not need to be made. Löwith makes the distinction between right and left wing in this suggestive way: Hegel, in affirming that the real is the rational, and the rational the real, had held the conservative or right-wing tendencies of the dialectic in tension with the revolutionary or left-wing tendencies. His successors broke this tension. Those on the right wing emphasized that the real is the rational, that that which is given in existence, including the Gospel event, is as such rational, the criterion of rationality; and they tended to neglect the sense in which the rational exercises a critical function over against the real. Those on the left, on the contrary, tended to deny the claim of the historically existent as such to rationality, or to genuine reality. The historically existent may have attained some degree of rationality, but the rational is the ultimate standpoint which calls into question all that is given in existence: only the rational is real.[2]

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[1] David Friedrich Strauss, _Die christliche Glaubenslehre in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung und im Kampfe mit der modernen Wissenschaft_, Tübingen; C.F. Osiander, Stuttgart, F.H. Köhler, 1840, Bd. I, pp. 1-2.

[2] _Ibid._, I, p. 4. Löwith credits Strauss with having been the first to adopt this designation of the distinction between Hegel's successors. _Von Hegel zu Nietzsche_, p. 65.

By this definition, Strauss is clearly on the left wing. Although he did not carry its "revolutionary" implications into his social and political thought, as some of his contemporaries did - he was in fact quite reactionary in these matters - his convictions concerning the sovereignty of Reason did make him a "revolutionary" in relation to the specific claims of the Christian Gospel, particularly its christological claims. He himself, in fact, dealt the first major blow against the harmony he described in the selection quoted above. He did this, specifically, by denying that the individual Jesus of Nazareth could have anything intrinsically to do with the reconciliation of the human to the divine. We shall discuss this central issue in section iii. However, he goes on, in his introduction to his Glaubenslehre, to discuss in more general terms the problem which he and others saw in the hegelian synthesis.

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[1] *Ibid*., pp. 4-5.

[2] Löwith, *Von Hegel zu Nietzsche*, p. 83.

In Hegel's treatment of Christianity as the Absolute Religion, says Strauss, a distinction is made between form and content. Hegel wishes to say that the content of Christianity constitutes the absolute Truth, the unity of the divine and the human. But the religious apprehension grasps this content in a way which is inadequate in point of form, in an emotive or representational form. It is the speculative task to free this content from its inadequate form, to grasp it in such a way that it belongs to Reason itself. But the performance of this task demands rigorous discipline. The common man must continue to know the Truth in its religious form rather than in its speculative form; but this difference, Strauss supposes Hegel to be suggesting, is non-essential. It is the same Truth. Now Strauss, calling on the assistance of Feuerbach and others, denies the validity of the distinction between form and content. The two are inseparable; a specific content can stand only in its own specific form. There is no such thing as the Truth grasped in an inadequate form; the content is true only when it achieves its adequate form. Religion does not concern itself objectively with the nature of the Truth in itself at all, but only subjectively with the demands of men's own needs and fancies.[1] Hegel's procedure at this point violates some of his own essential canons: according to the Logik content is not raw material, but material already informed; "in the higher sphere of speculative thought" the distinction between form and content is overcome.[1] The distinction "between Philosophy and positive religion" cannot be merely "unessential", because the religious standpoint

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[1] Strauss, Glaubenslehre, I, pp. 10-24. Strauss' discussion of Hegel here shares some of the characteristic deficiencies of his interpretation of Hegel's thought, which will be mentioned in the next section.

> makes the unessential into the essential, and the essential into the unessential. Precisely phantasy and emotion [Gemüth] constitute the essence of Religion, these formal determinations determine that the specific must be their content; one has not said anything when one designates the Absolute as the common content of Philosophy and Religion; for the content of Religion is just not simply the Absolute as such (that can only be the content of Philosophy), but as the object of emotion and phantasy.[2]

The prime instance of the way in which the religious consciousness distorts the universal content of Philosophy into specificity is in the case of the church's christology, the limitation of the unity of divine and human to one man. To this particular and central problem we shall return in section iii. The general problem is clear, however: the absolute content cannot be grasped in the religious form.

Already as a young assistant pastor Strauss was troubled by the problem. Schweitzer quotes a letter written by young Strauss in 1831 in which he is clearly trying to exorcise a certain sense of guilt in connection with his preaching. He must use the Vorstellungen of the Gospel story, but he tries to do so in such a way that the essential Begriff can shine through. He protests that he has no scruples about his procedure, but it is clear that he protests too much.[3] He is uneasy, but clearly does not wish to break with the Church. He is still committed to its Gospel, but only when interpreted by his own lights. This has been the condition of many a churchman whose compromise of the traditional form of the Gospel was little or no greater than Strauss's must already have been at that time. But Strauss has the honesty to be seriously troubled by it. He raises the problem again in the last section of his *Leben Jesu*. Suppose a pastor accepts his conclusions. What then? How can he continue in the Church, yet fail to be a hypocrite? If he tries to raise his congregation to his own scientific-philosophical perspectives, he will necessarily fail. If he accommodates himself, even in language, to the common viewpoint of the Church, while reserving his own interpretations of this language to himself, he is open to the charge of hypocrisy, whether justified or not. If he forsakes the ministerial office just when he has "penetrated into the deepest mysteries of theology" he acts irresponsibly. He may try subtly to combine the first two approaches, to accommodate himself to the level of his congregation yet labor to elevate its members whenever the occasion permits, but this is an extremely fine wire to walk and he can still only with difficulty avoid the pit of hypocrisy. Well, it is a serious dilemma, and it is clear that the central focus of the dilemma is christology. The issue focuses above all upon the problem of what he shall say on Christmas, and Good Friday, and Easter. Strauss wishes to remain responsible in relation to the Church which has nourished him, but it is clear that the breach which he has made between hegelianism and traditional christology has no ready resolution within the Church.[1] The reduction of traditional christology in the work of the rationalists or a Schleiermacher, however cleverly camouflaged by the use of traditional language, leaves them in fact with only an illusion of continuity with Church theology.[1] Strauss' honesty will not permit him to obscure the issue.

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[1] Ibid., I, p. 12.

[2] Ibid., I, p. 17.

[3] Albert Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of Its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede (translated by W. Montgomery, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1950), p. 69.

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[1] Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu, kritisch bearbeitet* (erster u. zweiter Banden, vierte Auflage, Tübingen: Verlag von E.F.Osiander, 1840), II, pp. 713-719. See the English translation, entitled, *The Life of Jesus, critically examined*, translated from the Fourth German Edition by George Eliot (Marian Evans), with an introduction by Otto Pfleiderer (New York: Macmillan & Co., 1898), pp. 781-784. Hereafter cited as "Eliot Tr.".

In his Glaubenslehre, Strauss does praise the humanitarian intent in Hegel's view, which bestows even on unphilosophical folk the possibility of knowing the truth, even though in representational form. And he cannot entirely agree with the opposite judgment, that since the truth is only to be found in Philosophy all religious history is "a history of human foolishness". Even though the imperfection of form does infect the content, reason is not altogether lacking in the representations, and there has been "through the ascending succession of religions" a progressively greater and greater "approximation to the truth".[2] Still, a hiatus exists between even the highest representational belief and the rational truth. His own Dogmatik can only be written

> for a future church of rational believers, or only for the present and future congregation of knowers.[3]

At any rate, "enough false attempts at mediation are now being made"; further progress is possible only through facing the cleavage squarely. The knowers are willing to live at peace with the believers so long as the believers also wish to have peace. But "if the over-pious succeed in casting us out of their church, we shall regard this as a gain".[4]

Actually, Strauss found it very hard to break with the church.

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[1] Ibid., II, pp. 663-665, 685-686 (Eliot Tr., pp. 757-758, 768).

[2] Glaubenslehre, I, pp. 21-22.

[3] Ibid., I, p. 24.

[4] Ibid., I, p. 356.

The dilemma was partly broken for him by the fact that, with the publication of his Leben Jesu he was for all practical purposes stripped of his ministerial office and of the possibility of teaching theology in Germany. But his own decision was slower in coming. He still had his children baptized. It took him to the end of his life to decide finally that the breach was indeed absolute. His attempt to restore the historical Jesus to a role of some unique significance in the third edition of the early Leben Jesu and in the Leben of 1864 simply represent his agonizing vacillations on the fundamental point. However, having finally come unequivocally once more to his own essential christological standpoint he did explicitly recognize the breach, and with a vengeance, at the end of his life. It is as though, in his "Confession", Der alte und der neue Glaube, after a lifetime of struggle he wanted to make up for all the temporizing of the past. Christianity is denounced almost wildly, "we" can no longer have anything to do with the Church and its ceremonies,[1] and "we" can only hope that with the advance of culture the Church will cease to exist altogether.[2]

The "we" of this new confession of faith is not merely editorial. He is not speaking for an organized party, but he is sure he must be speaking for many thoughtful modern people who see, on his grounds, that a clean break with the old faith is necessary. He hopes that his Confession will be accepted as a manifesto by this constituency, unorganized but numbering "no longer . . . only by thousands".[1] Strauss is not referring here to a specific philosophical school; by 1872, when this final work was published, Strauss has long outgrown being merely a "young hegelian". The eclectic mixture of Darwinism, pantheism, scientism, romantic aestheticism, common-sense naturalism, and social-economic-political conservatism found in the pages of this book do not concern us as such. Yet his pupil and admirer, Eduard Zeller, the famous scholar of Greek philosophy, seems to have regarded the book as the crown of Strauss' career, and on Zeller's showing this seems also to have been Strauss' own opinion. Here, at last, without binding himself to a given historical subject-matter, he would speak his own mind, would spell out the basis of his life and thought.[2] Furthermore, the one unifying factor in this eclectic mixture appears to be Strauss' desire to represent the outlook of the enlightened continental middle-class. Perhaps the most "confessional" statement in this work is his declaration that "I am a bourgeois (Bürgerlicher), and proud of it".[3]

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[1] Strauss, Der alte und der neue Glaube: ein Bekenntniss; neunte Auflage, 6. Band, Gesammelte Schriften von D. F. Strauss, nach des Verfassers letztwilligen Bestimmungen zusammengestellt, eingeleitet und mit erklärenden Nachweisungen versehen von Eduard Zeller, Bonn: Verlag von Emil Strauss, 1877, pp. 56-61. See the English translation entitled The Old Faith and the New: A Confession, authorized translation from the 6th edition by Mathilde Blind, 2nd edition, London: Asher & Co., 13 Bedford St., Covent Garden, 1873, pp. 98-107. Hereafter cited as "Blind Tr.".

[2] Ibid., pp. 196-200 (Blind Tr., 339-345).

The outlook of Strauss in 1872 cannot be identified, in detail, with his outlook as the author of the epoch-making Leben Jesu in 1835. Yet it is difficult to avoid the impression that this advocacy of the general outlook of the enlightened nineteenth century bourgeoisie provides the constant background and perhaps foundation for his life and thought from beginning to end. If this judgment is valid, it adds a further dimension to Strauss' attempt to shake loose the positive Gospel of Christianity from the hegelian synthesis:

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[1] Ibid., pp. 2-4 (Blind Tr., pp. 3-7).

[2] Eduard Zeller, David Friedrich Strauss in His Life and Writings; authorized translation with notes (London: Freethought Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St., E.C., 1879), pp. 130-145.

[3] Der alte und der neue Glaube, p. 181 (Blind Tr., p. 313).

Not only does he feel driven to dissolve Hegel's reconciliation of positive Christian faith with Knowledge, but also to loosen the alliance between the Christian Church and the European bourgeoisie, for which Hegel's synthesis had provided the rationale.

Strauss wished not only to represent the outlook of the enlightened middle class, but to carry this standpoint to what seemed to him to be its logical conclusion. Even though the honesty and courage with which he drove this standpoint to the conclusion of sharp religious heterodoxy led to his rejection by those to whom he felt the greatest kinship, he at any rate never broke faith with them. There is something quite pathetic in Strauss' rejection by the very group for which and on behalf of which he wrote. Apparently from the beginning of his career to its end he expected the enlightened upper middle class to recognize in him its authentic spokesman. He knew that his _Leben Jesu_ was a bold stroke which would offend many sensibilities; he had not expected to receive universal acclaim. But he had not expected to stand alone either. His anxiety in this isolated position was the cause of his vacillations in central critical convictions, of which the conciliatory third edition of his _Leben Jesu_ is an example.[1] Still, there was a fourth edition which returned to the standpoint of the first; he never reconciled himself to the storm of denunciation, yet his honesty did not permit him for very long to misrepresent his own serious convictions. But his last work still finds him hoping to frame a manifesto for this enlightened company. It did indeed create a sensation. Six large editions appeared in six months.

> On the other hand, the public discussions of the work were almost without exception disapproving; and if the horror of the orthodox adversaries was mitigated by the sense of satisfaction that the dreaded critic had now fully unmasked

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[1] Zeller, _op_. _cit_., pp. 65-66. See section iii below.

> himself in all his reprehensibility, the representatives of average theological liberalism pressed forward almost still more eagerly than the orthodox opponents to renounce all compromising association with a man whose opinions certainly went so far beyond their own, that he could from henceforth no longer reckon on their concurrence.
>
> . . . in this contest he now in his old age stood as much alone as he had done at the beginning of his career.
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> But this he had not now expected. . . . He was deeply grieved, and it required some time before he could recover his composure.[1]

All he had done, as he explained in the preface to the fourth edition, was to gather together thoughts which, taken separately, all enlightened men had long acknowledged. He had simply intended to show where, having accepted all of these judgments separately, they really stood with respect to the whole. He had meant to point out the logical conclusion of their own unshakable premises, and to show what course of action this conclusion required of them (e.g. that they must give up the pretence of being Christians, and of being attached to the church). The response had merely shown that they had not been able to face up, as he had, to the realities of their own position. He still looks for vindication to a less prejudiced future.[2]

In an ironical sense, Strauss was to find this vindication, in a most unexpected quarter. Karl Barth, for example, sees in Strauss the true fulfillment of nineteenth century thought in its relation to theology, correctly representing its true spirit and intent.[3] It is perfectly correct, according to Barth, that Strauss should be "in non-theological and non-ecclesiastical circles really the most well-known and the most significant theologian of the nineteenth century".[1] He is not a "pathological manifestation" of the age in which he lived, but a courageous exemplar of its own genuine intent.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 141-143.

[2] Ibid., pp. 144-145.

[3] Barth, David Friedrich Strauss als Theologe 1839-1939, Theologische Studien herausgegeben von Karl Barth, Heft 6 (Verlag der evangelischen Buchhandlung Zollikon, 1939), pp. 5, 19-23.

I agree that this is the case, and therefore I must agree with Barth also that we cannot see in Strauss a great anti-christ, or rebel, or Prometheus, or arch heretic. Rather, in Strauss speaks the enlightened man of the nineteenth century, in "the hour of the twilight of the Goethe-era", "a little bit arrogant and a little bit weltschmerzliche".[2] If Zeller finds in him one of the great intellects of the age, and if Nietzsche (in his Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen) singles him out as representing the poverty and debilitation of the age, the only contradiction is in the respective evaluations of Strauss' age by these two contemporaries; there is agreement in their judgment that Strauss is its authentic spokesman. In fact, fundamentally, he never intended to be anything else.

Not that I mean to limit his significance to his own century. He recognized, as any "cultivated" man enjoying some freedom of thought must recognize, the intrinsic unlikelihood of the Christian claim. Nor was Strauss simply hard-headed and insensitive. He was a man of acute moral sensibilities and aesthetic sensitivities. The essential claim of Christianity as well as its historical crimes were an offense to both. He was engrossed in the social and political problems of the modern world, devoted to human progress, at least along the lines which he considered sound. And if his pedantry kept him from being a great poet, his poetry at least reveals something of the spirit and fundamental apprehension of man's pilgrimage which we find in those who excelled him poetically - Goethe, Schiller, Heine, and

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1. Ibid., p. 5.
2. Ibid., pp. 13-14.

other lesser men who were his models and with whom in spirit he was in such warm sympathy. It is not surprising that the conviction should have grown in such a man that Christianity is too primitive in its outlook to satisfy the intellectual and spiritual quest of any genuinely modern man; that it is not only a diversion, but a barrier against man's authentic spiritual striving.

ii. Strauss' Undialectical "Hegelianism"

Even before Strauss' break with church theology had become visible, he declared that philosophy must supply the fundamental principles and criteria for his theological work. In a letter, written in 1833 as a young "Repetent" in the theological Stift at Tübingen, Strauss laid down his program:

> In my theology, philosophy occupies such a predominant position that my theological views can only be worked out to completeness by means of a more thorough study of philosophy, and this course of study I am now going to prosecute uninterruptedly and without concerning myself whether it leads me back to theology or not.[1]

Strauss carried this program through in his published work throughout his life, but it very soon became evident that it was not in fact going to lead him back to theology.

"Philosophy" for young Strauss meant hegelianism, above all. Strauss began studying Hegel's philosophy while he was a student at Tübingen, though he found the philosophical instruction there still as far behind the times as Hegel himself had found it thirty odd years earlier. Just as Hegel had read his Kant, so Strauss had to discover his Hegel, on his own. But discover it he did, and the new system made such a profound impression on him that he went in

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[1] Quoted by Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, pp. 70-71, from Deutsche Revue, June 1905, pp. 343ff.

1831 to Berlin to study under the great man himself. But he no sooner arrived than, after scarcely a month, Hegel died. Schleiermacher, also teaching at Berlin, broke the sad news to young Strauss; and the student replied, as Schweitzer says, "with a certain want of tact", that it was to hear Hegel that he had come to Berlin.[1] Strauss became a disciple of Hegel nevertheless, undeterred by this unseemly show of mortality.

One is bound to say, however, that Strauss' hegelianism was hegelianism simplified, hegelianism made "consistent", i.e. hegelianism made, in the last analysis, undialectical. Gone are the "deductions" which are so baffling and unconvincing and outrageous, gone is the brain-racking pace of Hegel's speculative ascent, gone is the blacking-out of impenetrable obscurity when we have reached the speculative peak. Gone are the ambivalences, the logical puzzles, the ambiguities which had left some of Hegel's most fundamental questions unresolved. Gone is the tortured prose. Strauss was an elegant writer, clear, bright, urbane, giving his sentences no more to carry than they could manage without inconvenience. Gone also is the speculative daring, the titanic struggle of a great philosopher with ultimate philosophical and theological questions; the genius is gone. Strauss reaped Hegel's speculative whirlwind - and marketed it, bundled, tidied and tamed, with just enough nip left in it to cause an enlightened, romantic *Burgher* to breathe deeply during his evening constitutional.

It is true that Strauss sometimes attempts to use something like the Hegelian dialectic. For example, in his celebrated *Leben Jesu* each incident or bloc of material is given first its traditional supernaturalist interpretation, then some characteristic rationalistic interpretations, then the mythological interpretation is offered as a kind of synthesis between the two. Schweitzer is no doubt right in seeing this pattern as conscious employment of the Hegelian dialectic.[1] But the dialectic is surely reduced here to a method of organization; there is no attempt to show how each moment develops necessarily out of the last. The dialectic in Strauss' hands is not the internal movement, the life of an idea in its own intrinsic self-development. Similarly in the Glaubenslehre: hegelian-sounding topics are introduced, but Strauss nowhere shows signs of having grasped the significance of the moment of particularity in Hegel's dialectic. Ironically, the problem of alienation, which gave life to Hegel's mature dialectic, is returned in Strauss to the position it had in Hegel's earliest writings, simply as a failure to grasp the universal standpoint.[2] (The extraordinary phenomenon has indeed often been remarked, how Hegel's successors tended to take up standpoints similar to those which he had left behind, in his unpublished early writings.) Strauss does see that man's consciousness of his identity with the divine has developed gradually, in the course of his history. But this conscious reconciliation of the divine and the human could not depend essentially on any particular event, precisely because the essential is opposed to the merely particular. The truth might be exemplified in various ways in history, but it itself must be considered to be quite independent of history.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

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[1] Ibid., p. 80.

[2] This tendency to reduce the dialectic to a mere manner of expression is frequently noticeable among the young hegelians. Cf. Karl Löwith: "Wer ihre Schriften studiert, wird die Erfahrung machen, daß sie trotz ihres aufreizenden Tons einen faden Geschmack hinterlassen, weil sie mit dürftigen Mitteln maßlose Ansprüche stellen und Hegels begriffliche Dialektik zu einem rhetorischen Stilmittel breittreten." Von Hegel zu Nietzsche, p. 79.

Fundamentally, the historical moment of Hegel's dialectic was shorn away in Strauss' thought. An idea might be developed in men's minds over the course of history, but it cannot be posited decisively by a particular event. This presupposition informed Strauss' work as an historian in a fundamental way, as a criterion for what could be regarded as historical. It was, for example, of the very essence of his mythological interpretation of New Testament history that the biblical writer was unconsciously trying to express an idea, a universal, in reporting what he might quite sincerely though erroneously have supposed to be an historical event. In the Introduction to his Leben Jesu Strauss remarks that his "mythical" interpretation agrees with the allegorical (and Kant's "moral" interpretation) in that both

> . . . equally allow that the historian apparently relates that which is historical, but they suppose him, under the influence of a higher inspiration known or unknown to himself, to have made use of this historical semblance merely as the shell of an idea - of a religious representation. The only essential distinction therefore between these two modes of explanation is, that according to the allegorical this higher intelligence is the immediate divine agency; according to the mythical, it is the spirit of a people or a community.[1]

That the truth could actually assume the form of unïque historical event is clearly ruled out in principle. To be sure, Strauss has appropriated the hegelian view of the Absolute expressing itself historically in the spirit of a people, i.e. in a general way, within an historical epoch. But Hegel's struggle with the possibility that the Absolute might actually live, might realize its own substantial life in an historical event - this struggle is simply passed by in Strauss' consideration. Strauss makes frequent use of the "husk" and "kernel" form of speech:[2] the real kernel of truth is of the nature

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1. Strauss, Das Leben Jesu, I, pp. 54-55 (Eliot Tr., p. 65).

2. E.g., ibid., p. 56 (Eliot Tr., p. 66).

of an idea, of which the "historical semblance" of the biblical writer's report is only the "empty husk". Thus it is clear that the redemptive messiah-ship, the God-manhood, and all its embodiments such as the resurrection, has veracity only in something which happens in the minds of the disciples; it cannot be something which happens primarily in the historic event of Jesus Christ.

With Strauss' undialectical idealism is combined a dogmatic naturalism: All phenomena are included in "a chain of causes and effects" within the finite, or natural order itself. Nature is autonomous; nothing which occurs within its domain can be affected by an agency outside its domain. The gradual recognition of the exclusive sufficiency of causal explanation has been the decisive mark of "the progress of mental cultivation" historically. In the opening pages of his Leben Jesu Strauss remarks that this development has brought about an unavoidable conflict between "modern culture" and the ancient biblical records. The latter purports to unfold a sacred history of events in which the divine has intervened immediately into the human realm, while the whole weight of modern scientific culture testifies to the impossibility of any such "immediate intervention".[1] Of course, this conclusion leaves open the possibility of either a deistic or an immanentist view of God: God might have brought this whole natural order into existence, might have established its laws and might have set everything in motion originally. Or God might be conceived as immanent within nature, accomplishing His purposes mediately, through finite agencies within the causal order. The important thing is that God must be conceived in such wise as to leave the autonomy and regularity of nature intact. The different spheres of finite existence, e.g. the human and the merely material, do intrude upon one another; but

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[1] Ibid., I, pp. 1-2 (Eliot Tr., pp. 39-40).

> . . . the totality of finite things forms a vast circle which, except that it owes its existence and laws to a superior power, suffers no intrusion from without.[1]

Nature is self-contained, harmonious, ruled by unbroken law. Therefore, some of the things reported in the biblical text just could not have happened, because they are contrary to the nature of things. When Strauss is presenting his critical principles, he begins with the criterion that a report cannot be considered historical,

> First. When the narration is irreconcilable with the known and universal laws which govern the course of events. Now according to these laws, agreeing with all just philosophical conceptions and all credible experience, the absolute cause never disturbs the chain of secondary causes by single arbitrary acts of interposition, but rather manifests itself in the production of the aggregate of finite casualities, and of their reciprocal action. . . .
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> Another law which controls the course of events is the law of succession, in accordance with which all occurrences, not excepting the most violent convulsions and the most rapid changes, follow in a certain order of sequence of increase and decrease. . . . Lastly, all those psychological laws, which render it improbable that a human being should feel, think, and act in a manner directly opposed to his own habitual mode and that of men in general, must be taken into consideration. . . .[2]

In this important passage the naturalism which we have already noted is made into a basic critical principle. Indeed, it was almost axiomatic for Strauss. He never attempts even to spell it out, much less to defend it; and perhaps we ought not to expect him to do so in a critical work of this sort. As a first-generation hegelian, Strauss could not have agreed in detail on metaphysical matters with the other biblical critics before and since; but this naturalistic substratum was an axiom concerning which there could simply be no argument, either for him or for most of the others. It was never rigorously defined philosophically. But Strauss' premise that all historical events must conform to commonly-understood uniformities of nature accorded even more with the enlightened spirit of the age than his premise that beliefs concerning supposed sacred events are to be explained primarily in terms of the propensities of human nature in general.[1]

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[1] Ibid., Bd. I, pp. 80-81 (Eliot Tr., p. 78).

[2] Ibid., I, pp. 100-101 (Eliot Tr., p. 88).

The legitimacy of combining this naturalism with the sort of idealism of which we have seen glimpses seems to have been no problem for Strauss at all. In his earliest and most important published works Strauss doesn't even consider the problem worthy of discussion. This in itself should be a warning to us that the familiar labels of "idealism", "naturalism", "materialism", etc. do not necessarily bring us to the fundamental philosophical and theological issues of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Later, in _Der alte und der neue Glaube_, he attempts to show that materialism and idealism are but two sides of the same coin. It is true that, like most discussions in that book, his reconciliation of materialism and idealism is sketchy and vague; all that seems to be left of his hegelianism at this time is the conviction that almost any standpoints which are modern, cultural, and scientific can be reconciled if only one puts his mind to it. Materialism and idealism, he says, agree in being monistic views of reality,

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[1] Basil Willey, in _Nineteenth Century Studies_ (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), pp. 207-220, calls attention to the quite independent construction, in England in 1838, of a book dealing with the Gospel narratives from presuppositions remarkably similar to those of Strauss' _Leben Jesu_: Charles Hennell's _Inquiry Concerning the Origin of Christianity_. Hennell had begun his work, he said in the Preface, "with the expectation that, at least, the principal miraculous facts supposed to lie at the foundation of Christianity would be found to be impregnable, but it was continued with a gradually increasing conviction that the true account of the life of Jesus Christ, and of the spread of his religion, would be found to contain no deviation from the known laws of nature, nor to require, for their explanation, more than the operation of human motives and feelings, acted upon by the peculiar circumstances of the age and country whence the religion originated". (Quoted in Willey, p. 210.)

Hennell and Strauss did eventually discover one another, and it was under Hennell's influence that Marian Evans undertook the labor of translating Strauss' _Leben Jesu_. Strauss also had Hennell's book translated into German, and wrote a prefatory note in which he marvels at this achievement by an English merchant with no previous knowledge of the developments made in Biblical criticism in Germany. With some justice, Strauss points to Hennell's production as a striking instance of the fact that "at certain periods certain modes of thought lie as it were in the atmosphere". (Quoted in Willey, p. 219.)

> i.e., they endeavour to derive the totality of phenomena from a single principle - to construct the universe and life from the same block. In this endeavour one theory starts from above, the other from below; the latter constructs the universe from atoms and atomic forces, the former from ideas and idealistic forces. But if they would fulfil their tasks, the one must lead from its heights down to the very lowest circles of Nature, and to this end place itself under the control of careful observation; while the other must take into account the higher intellectual and ethical problems.[1]

What I have quoted contains about all Strauss has to say about the manner in which these two systems should be reconciled; whether this will do the job is a question I am content to leave to the idealists and the materialists. But I believe that Strauss signaled the essential point of his own concern in seeing both systems as "block" views of reality. This monism is what must be maintained and set over against the dualism which he associates with Christianity. Instead of quarrelling, let them unite against the common foe![2] The enemy which Strauss has in his sights is the view which sees God as radically transcendent over the world, working not only immanently within the general structures of the world but also and above all working in a particularistic fashion, acting and revealing himself uniquely in particular historical events. In combating this transcendence, this "dualism", this particularism, Strauss' brand of either idealism or materialism will do the job equally well.

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[1] Strauss, Der alte und der neue Glaube, p. 140 (Blind Tr., p. 242).

[2] Ibid., pp. 139-142 (Blind Tr., pp. 240-245). He does not mean by this reconciliation to suggest that reality is part material and part spiritual; the whole of reality is somehow both, depending upon the perspective from which it is viewed. He has no doubt, for example, that a material explanation will soon be forthcoming for the phenomena of thought and emotion.

This same polemic appears already, in somewhat subtler form, in the more important writings of Strauss' earlier years. Christianity is irreconcilably dualistic in its outlook; heaven and earth, God and man are sharply separated. This dualism, in which God exists in abstract transcendence over the world, appears to Strauss to be in direct contradiction to the genuine teachings of the new speculative Philosophy, according to which God is fully immanent in the world. With pantheism, the speculative Philosophy sees "the processes of nature and history as developments of the divine powers, in the highest sense therefore [it sees] man as God become revealed".[1] How can Hegel claim to have reconciled this view with Christianity, the dualism of which he acknowledges, not only in the Middle Ages but throughout, so long as its principle is grasped only under the representations of faith?[2] Well, of course Hegel sees the principle of incarnation as a reconciliation of the divine and the human. But this representation grasps the unity of the divine and human only in one man, not in mankind, not in the human self-consciousness in general. Furthermore - and here I think Strauss argues most acutely - Christians do not believe that the distinction between God and man is dissolved in the incarnation. The "two natures" are joined in Christ, but the distinction between them remains intact. Far from dissolving the dualism, the Christian believer presupposes it in the miracle of God-become-man.[3]

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1. Glaubenslehre, I, p. 25.
2. Ibid., I, pp. 25-29.
3. Ibid., I, pp. 29-31, 35-37.

Strauss sees this dualism, this transcendence of God over the world, preserved in the trinitarian and personalistic teachings of Christianity respecting God. God has an internal life of His own, independent of the world. God is a person - indeed often conceived in the most crudely anthropomorphic way - set over against other, creaturely, persons. So long as these affirmations are retained, He cannot be conceived as a cosmic-historical process coming to self-conscious fulfillment in mankind; mankind can never be the revelation of God, for God Himself is other than man. Hegel's doctrine of the Trinity bears only a semblance of conformity to the Church's teaching; the three moments within the divine life are not really "personal" at all, though Hegel's language artfully obscures this fact. And besides that, the Hegelian view is really nonsense at this point; Strauss is evidently offended by Hegel's view of a logical movement within the divine Substance.[1] The whole effort to affirm that God is "Person" in the sense of "Subject", as well as absolute "Substance" seems to Strauss to be an act of wishful thinking: the two concepts can be combined only in the intentions of a philosopher, not in any genuinely coherent concept. If God is affirmed to be a Person He is one among others, though perhaps the greatest, yet still finite, not the absolute Substance. If, in the face of this difficulty, it is claimed that God is the infinite ground, positing all finite persons and the object of their absolute dependence, then in fact all analogy of God with anything like what we know as personality is dissolved. We cannot have it both ways, nor can a resort to a trinitarian view of God resolve the difficulty by positing a personal relationship within the divine ground itself, independent of creaturely existence;

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[1] Ibid., I, pp. 487-501. Strauss criticizes the "speculative" views of Schelling, Weisse, and others, as well as Hegel's.

since a genuine relationality would be possible only if the three divine persons were posited over against one another, mutually limiting one another as is the case with human persons, but then of course they would be finite and not absolute. No, says Strauss, Spinoza pointed to the only intelligible way of relating the absolute Substance to personal qualities: personal characterizations belong only to natura naturata, to the finite world as appearance of the divine Substance, not to the absolute divine Substance itself.[1]

Not that Strauss ever works out a consistent spinozism. His brand of speculative Philosophy, however, has in common with spinozism the conviction that the divine Substance is completely immanent in the world, and that the world is completely a manifestation of the divine Substance. Religious (*nichtwissenschaftlich*) representation makes God an "other", over against the world, in such wise that God is not fully immanent in the world, and the world contains elements foreign to the divine, is not posited purely by God. God must reveal Himself, from outside the world, from another realm. According to the enlightened philosophical (*wissenschaftlich*) view, however, between God and the world there is a distinction without a separation: God is the inner Substance of all things, absolute Reality in its eternal self-identity, while the world is a changing development among finite entities in time. But the world has reality only in virtue of the divine Substance, while the divine Substance fulfills its self-actualization by possessing itself in the world. God does not act on the world, but manifests His unchanging Substance in the temporal process of the world, which is to be fulfilled in "the return of time into eternity, the transposition of the world into the element of the absolute Life".[1] This fulfillment, of course, is taking place in mankind. God would not be a reality, Strauss says in the Leben Jesu, if he were "shut up in his infinitude", apart from the world. But he must be the ground of the finite, enter into the finite, "merely as a limited manifestation of Himself, from which He eternally returns into unity".[2] In this positing and eternal return there is what might be called a living Subjecthood, or even Personality. There is at any rate a personal moment in the process. But this does not mean that God is "a Person beside or over other persons". God is rather

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[1] *Ibid.*, I, pp. 503-507.

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[1] Ibid., I, pp. 359-361. In Strauss' late "Confession" his pantheism is stated still more baldly, if no more clearly. He quotes with approval a passage from Schleiermacher's posthumous work on dialectics in which God and the cosmos are conceived as two sides of a single coin. God is that unity of which the universe is the plurality; "the universe is the sum-total of all opposites, the deity, the negation of all opposites". They are coordinate, "only two values for the same thing". Whatever Schleiermacher may have meant by this doctrine, Strauss intends to say that "God" is the name for the "being" in which the plural objects of the world are united, in which they participate in virtue of the fact that they exist. "God" is the name for the Cosmos considered as a unity. We cannot actually go behind the idea of Cosmos; we are dealing in phantasies if we try to concoct some notion of a Creator or an absolute Personality. (Der alte und der neue Glaube, pp. 79-81 [Blind Tr., pp. 138-140]) It is a matter of indifference to Strauss whether we say "God" or "Cosmos" as a whole; "Cosmos" has less objectionable connotations, if it is understood that it is not merely the aggregate of all particular things. We do still have a religion, the basis of which - and indeed the "essential ingredient" in all religion - is expressed in the verbal formula which Strauss takes over from Schleiermacher, "the feeling of unconditional dependence". We experience ourselves to be "'part of a part', our might as nothing in comparison to the almightiness of Nature". We find in this Whole an endless variety and all manner of convulsive struggles, but of course all of this characterizes the Cosmos from the side of its plurality. But there is another side. The "tremendous contrasts, awful struggles" "do not disturb the stability and harmony of the whole . . . they, on the contrary, preserve it". In quasi-evolutionary language we are told of the emergence of higher from lower in Nature; in this process the Cosmos as a unity is the effect as well as the primary cause "of all that is reasonable and good". (Ibid., pp. 93-95 [Blind Tr., pp. 161-165])

[2] Leben Jesu, II, pp. 704-705 (Eliot Tr., p. 777).

> the eternal movement of the Universal making itself into a Subject, which comes first to objectivity and reality in subjects, and thereby aufhebt the subject in its abstract being-for-self. Because God in Himself is the eternal Personality, therefore He has eternally permitted His other, Nature, to arise out of itself in order eternally to return to Himself as self-conscious Geist. Or, the Personality of God must not be considered as a single personality but as universal personality; instead of personifying the Absolute from our side, we must learn to grasp it as that which personifies itself into the infinite.[1]

It is difficult to unravel some confusions which appear in this statement. What Strauss appears to mean is that God becomes personal only insofar as the divine Substance attains self-reflection - and thereby full reality - in the personal order of mankind (though people cease being merely finite subjects or persons when this occurs). At any rate Strauss seems to make this view his own, and further considers that it represents the genuine intent of Hegel, once Hegel is stripped of some of his confusing rhetoric and some marginal prejudices.

This latter claim raises the larger but not too interesting question of the adequacy of Strauss' understanding of Hegel. The answer to this question, however, lies buried under three tasks which Strauss executed in relation to Hegel, and which he considered more important than the attempt to expound Hegel's thought as such. The first of these tasks is to show that the right-wing followers of Hegel have not correctly understood the implications of Hegel's doctrine, but have permitted themselves to be led astray by Hegel's rhetoric at certain points. Thus Strauss attempts to demolish the impression under which some of these men appeared to labor, that Hegel had vindicated a personal rather than a primarily pantheistic view of God's nature. The second task, closely related to the first, is to strip away confusions in Hegel's own understanding of his essential viewpoint. These appear, Strauss believes, particularly in Hegel's attempt to make use of traditional theological doctrines, such as the Trinity and the Incarnation. Hegel's apologetic intent has simply led him to betray his own genuine insights at certain points. We are not to suppose that Strauss was simply unaware of the important role assigned to positivity in Hegel's mature expressions of his System. Rather, Strauss is aware of it but rejects it in order to affirm what he believes to be consistent with Hegel's essential standpoint. The third task, then, is to show what really follows from the basic line of hegelian speculation. The result of this constructive effort, as we have seen, is a fairly straightforward pantheism, in which, however, mankind is capable of gradually rising in thought from its origin in the natura naturata to the standpoint of the absolute Substance itself. There is no internal life or logical movement within the divine Substance in itself, and therefore it can in no way be separate from the world. Events in the cosmic process can only be exemplifications, of greater or lesser adequacy, of universal principles; i.e. the truth can be participated in, to some degree, by the minds of various persons and groups in the course of history, but it cannot be manifested in particular historical events as such.

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[1] Glaubenslehre, I, pp. 523-524; see pp. 512-524 for a discussion of Hegel's doctrine of the divine as personal Subject. Cf. also Der alte und der neue Glaube, p. 79 (Blind Tr., pp. 137-138), for a discussion of Hegel's doctrine of divine Subjecthood as understood by Strauss.

Strauss, then, has de-historicized Hegel's idealism, and thereby has dissolved Hegel's concrete universal. He has put forward, as Hegel's basic standpoint when stripped of the accretions of rhetoric and prejudice, a view which on Hegel's terms would be an abstract idealism. Strauss is quite aware that he is revising Hegel's own scheme; what he does not seem to be aware of is the fact that such revisions would utterly demolish the System. One may well argue that Hegel never successfully demonstrated the intelligibility of the concrete universal and the historical dialectic, the self-related inner life of Geist and the importance of unique events in the immanent reconciliation of Geist with its other. But then there is no dialectic, no life of Geist in the world, no System. One has denied everything that belongs to Hegel's distinctive genius, has drained all the juice from it and left only a pulp of pantheistic cliche.

iii. Philosophy and Historical Criticism vs. the Christ of the Gospel

Strauss won fame, and lost forever the chance of pursuing the academic career to which he aspired, by the publication of his first book. It was so widely distributed, it caused such a sensation and such fierce controversy, that Strauss' name would have been remembered - with cheers in some quarters, shudders in others - even if he had done nothing else so long as he lived. Indeed, this book made such a great splash and made its young author so the center of attention that everything that followed in what was really a very eventful career seems almost an anti-climax.

For Strauss wrote on Jesus of Nazareth. He denied, sharply and unequivocally, the unique claims made by eighteen centuries of Christians on Jesus' behalf. Well, that had been done before. But Strauss was a churchman, with a wide knowledge of scripture and the history of Christian thought; his personal relations within the church had apparently engendered no great bitterness; he was undoubtedly a deeply religious man, at least in a certain mode, whose poetry, many of whose writings, and the testimony of those who knew him, all evidence a rich spirituality. Nor was his work a mere diatribe. It shows broad theological learning. The material was well-sifted, the writing sober, restrained, cautiously acute, the criticism based on coherent critical principles. One senses a certain regret for the conflict that this may cause, a certain kindly consideration for the sentiments of the simple believer who may be offended; but Strauss will not flinch from his task.

We need not delve into the critical procedure and conclusions of the _Leben Jesu_ in any detail here. Schweitzer has given what I think is an excellent summary of Strauss' historical-critical work in his _Quest for the Historical Jesus_ (pp. 78-95). Strauss patiently and consistently applies his mythological point of view to each block of material in the Gospel account of the career of Jesus. He acknowledges that the believer, who simply takes all this material at face value, as historical, will of course not accept this procedure. But if the Bible is history, why not the Koran, or the sacred books of every religion that ever saw the light of day? No, of course, they cannot all be true, first because they contradict one another, second because if they were all true the Christian revelation would lose its unique authority, third because every sane man knows that the sacred books of these other religions contain accounts which are clearly fabulous fantasies. But the devotees of every religion would make precisely the same points, only in their own favor. But if we view these sacred books side by side, detaching ourselves from our natural partiality in order to compare the kinds of claims made and the nature of the attestation to these claims, then it becomes immediately clear that the miraculous claims are equally unlikely, the attestation equally weak. If we cannot defend the proposition that all are historical, then only arbitrarily can we deny the judgment that none is historical, not even that which we have been taught to cherish. There are of course differences in the character of the stories, but these differences do not affect the fact that all alike violate the judgments of modern, scientifically informed common sense regarding what is possible within nature. Of course, in each case, not everything stated is clearly mythological, and there is always no doubt some historical core. But the unique, divine claims always rest on that which clearly bears its mythological mark on its face.[1]

Strauss scrupulously avoids deciding just what elements in the stories are historical; when the purely mythological character of any detail is in doubt, he admits it. He is interested most in showing what, on his terms, is clearly mythological, and in refuting traditional supernaturalist interpretations on the one hand, and modern rationalistic or naturalistic[2] interpretations on the other. The work is heavily polemical, its intent predominantly critical. The result, as Schweitzer notes, is that positive opinions about the actual character and career of Jesus are carefully avoided; it is "difficult - indeed, strictly speaking, impossible - to determine Strauss's own distinctive conception of the life of Jesus, to discover what he really thinks is moving behind the curtain of myth".[3] There are detached suggestions, but Strauss studiously avoids any connected account of a constructive sort. Certainly he never suggests that the life of Jesus as such is a myth, and he seems to regard Jesus' messianic consciousness as an historical fact. Indeed, Schweitzer himself is pleased with the extent to which Strauss recognizes the dominance of the eschatological in Jesus' consciousness. But the concept of the messiah is presupposed in Jewish thought of the period;

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[1] Leben Jesu, I, pp. 61-96 (Eliot Tr., pp. 69-86).

[2] "Naturalistic" in the sense, for example, of explaining a miracle in terms of some natural phenomenon - the "water" Elijah poured on his sacrifice was really naphtha, etc.

[3] Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 90.

it does not originate in Jesus or in men's impressions of Jesus. And the application of this messiah concept to Jesus himself, and the "mighty works" which are made to attest to it, are only too clearly the result of the myth-making process of a pre-scientific people, a process which begins within Jesus' lifetime and proceeds during the decades between his death and the writing of the Gospel narratives. The constituents of this myth-making process are the misunderstandings of historical events, the tendency of miracle- and messianic-minded people to see these events in terms of a presupposed scheme of divine activity, the elaboration of the stories (generally unconscious) in accordance with these same expectations as the stories spread and become part of the tradition of a young and unsophisticated religious community, etc.[1] Strauss is not harsh about all this; he is detached, even inclined to be benevolent. There was no conscious deceit. The real author of the myth was the spirit (Geist) of the community, which expressed in these stories the authentic standpoint of its own historical epoch. The whole thing was a perfectly natural mistake, given the predispositions of a simple age. But it was a mistake that must be corrected firmly by the modern scientific thinker, nevertheless. Jesus must have been an unusual man, but a Savior he could not have been, in any sense.

The liberal theologians, with whom Strauss would have liked to ally himself, generally shrank from such drastic conclusions; even though they could not make the traditional affirmations about Jesus they nevertheless contrived to find some significant place for him in their systems. So Strauss was attacked from every side, even by those with whom he would most willingly have been at peace. Indeed, he found a kind of ironical support from the orthodox, with whom he disagreed most totally. He drew unexpected praise, for example, from the orthodox Hengstenberg, as having had the courage to demonstrate clearly the precise outcome of hegelian philosophy, indeed philosophy in general, and with it the liberal, mediating brands of theology which sought to come to terms with "modern knowledge". In Strauss the issue had been honestly joined, the cleavage which the mediators had obscured had been made clear. Now the really contradictory movements of the day could go their own respective ways in peace. "Unbelief will more and more cast off the elements of faith to which it still clings, and faith will cast off its elements of unbelief. That will be an inestimable advantage".[1] Orthodoxy, e.g. in the person of Karl Barth, has continued to make the same use of Strauss.

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[1] Leben Jesu, I, pp. 91-97 (Eliot Tr., pp. 83-86) et passim.

Strauss was not sure that he liked being the infidel unmasked. It evidently disturbed Strauss to have to exclude so drastically Jesus' role in his theological scheme of things. He seems to have been almost as disturbed about his conclusions as were his contemporaries. More than that, in the terrific barrage of attack and counterattack in which he found himself involved, he felt his own convictions weakening. Perhaps he had made the cut too clean, had rejected the truth about Jesus with the false. The attacks of the liberals" (who had been only too glad to find a target to the left of themselves, against whom they could assume the unaccustomed position of defenders of the faith) seem in particular to have told on him. Bold as his polemics were, in the Streitschriften, he was not a street-fighter by nature, as both Schweitzer and Zeller testify. He longed for peace, he was unsure of his stand. So he produced a more conciliatory position in papers written between 1837 and 1839, and most notably in the feeble third edition of the Leben Jesu (1838).

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[1] Quoted and discussed in Schweitzer, op. cit., pp. 106-107.

He makes a number of critical concessions, e.g. admits that the Fourth Gospel may be more genuine and reliable than he had previously allowed. Still more important for our concerns is a major theological concession. As Barth says, "Strauss now suddenly recalls the saying of Hegel: 'In the forefront of all actions there stands an individual'", and Strauss is now prepared to see in this individual Jesus at least some of the things that Schleiermacher saw: Jesus is the highest of mankind in religious spirituality, and since religion is a higher sphere of human activity than most Jesus represents a kind of pinnacle of human self-consciousness. Indeed, the union of an individual human self-consciousness with God is not philosophically impossible, and it does indeed appear - subject to historical verification - that in Jesus there was a perfect unity of self-consciousness with God-consciousness. He is the highest religious spirit we know, in him is the highest realization of the religious idea we know, he is the inspiration of mankind whose presence in the heart is needful for a perfect piety, etc. etc.[1] It was a pathetic performance. "Everywhere feeble compromises!" as Schweitzer exclaims. But Strauss recovered himself. In the fourth edition (1840) he admits that his previous edition "contained too much of compliance". He excuses himself on the grounds that he had tried so hard to maintain an open mind and to listen seriously to his critics, that he had lost his own perspective.

> Hence on coming with a more collected mind to this last revision, I found alterations at which I could not but wonder, and by which I had evidently done myself injustice. In all these passages the earlier readings are now restored, and thus my labor in this new edition has chiefly consisted

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[1] I have not had access to this third edition of the Leben Jesu, but am dependent on Zeller, op. cit., pp. 62-66; Schweitzer, op. cit., pp. 118-119; and Barth, From Rousseau to Ritschl (the translation of eleven chapters of Die protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert, London: SCM Press Ltd., 1959), pp. 383-384.

> in whetting, as it were, my good sword, to free it from the notches made in it rather by my own grinding, than by the blows of my enemies.[1]

In the Glaubenslehre the sword remains whetted. But by 1864, when his new Leben Jesu für das deutschen Volk was published, it had become badly blunted. Here, says Schweitzer, "he renounced his better opinions of 1835, eliminated eschatology, and, instead of the historic Jesus, portrayed the Jesus of liberal theology".[2] This work holds little interest for our purposes, because in it he returns essentially to the view of Jesus exhibited in the renounced third edition of the first Leben Jesu, though somewhat updated in order to conform more fully to the spirit of the later period. He did not compromise, as he had during the earlier lapse, his conviction that the Fourth Gospel is basically unhistorical. Still, in this work he again forsook the cold isolation of his own distinctive position, and sank into the broad, tepid stream of liberal "lives of Jesus" which proliferated in the nineteenth century. But in Der alte und der neue Glaube Strauss returned, with a vengeance, to his more stringent line. Traditional christology, along with all basic doctrines of the "old faith", is pilloried and dismissed,[3] and even Jesus' eminence as a moral and religious teacher is denied. His best teachings were unoriginal, the rest were irrational, unscientific, and socially left-wing. Jesus was drunk with millenial visions and divine pretensions. In short, "there is no help for it; according to our conceptions he was a Schwärmer".[1]

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[1] Leben Jesu, I, pp. ix-x (Eliot Tr., p. xxxli).

[2] Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 95. See Barth's theologically acute discussion of this work, in relation to other liberal views of the life of Jesus popular at the time. From Rousseau to Ritschl, pp. 372-379.

[3] Der alte und der neue Glaube, pp. 15-19 (Blind Tr., pp. 26-32).

Leaving all Schwärmerei behind, Strauss finds the true, rational basis of morality and religion in the idea of the species, Humanity. True generic human nature is rational, reflecting the pure Rationality of universal nature. A man is fulfilled, not in himself or in relation to any other individual as such, but in relation to the total species, a relation expressing itself concretely in social terms. The conflict within history (now understood in quasi-darwinian terms) is between sensuality and reason, egotism and the impulses directed socially and therefore toward the rational unity of the species. Morality, then, is "the relation of man to the idea of his species", religion "is his relation to the idea of the universe, the ultimate source of all life and being".[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 50-56 (Blind Tr., pp. 87-89). Jesus' adequacy moral teacher is denied particularly on the grounds that he neglected the virtues and refinements of middle-class capitalism, which bulk large in the ethic of the "new faith". For example, Jesus - and Christianity with him - never understood the values of capitalistic acquisitiveness in "promoting culture and humanitarian tendencies", since Jesus considered the love of money to be sinful. We may well be indulgent toward Jesus, considering the backward time and place in which he lived; but this backwardness disqualifies him as a moral teacher for modern culture. Not only did the disadvantages of his background render it impossible for him to place the proper value on money and property: "Still less, under the circumstances, was there any prospect of a higher culture, a refinement of manners, and embellishment of life, by means of science and art." (Ibid., pp. 41-43 [Blind Tr., pp. 71-76])

[2] Ibid., pp. 153-161 (Blind Tr., pp. 263-272). Strauss characteristically understood man's fundamental moral and spiritual problem as the struggle between his higher and lower faculties, between the intellectual or "spiritual" and the merely biological. In his Confession Strauss indicates that Darwin has shown beyond any doubt that there is an ineradicable trace of the ape and the tiger in man, a fact that, for example, makes laughable the efforts of the famous Peace Conference at Lausanne: "Do you know, ladies and gentlemen, when you will bring mankind to the point of settling its disputes by peaceful convocation? On the day when you shall have arranged that it shall only propagate itself by intellectual converse." (Ibid., pp. 173-174 [Blind Tr., p. 299]) Still, Strauss draws upon his ethical darwinism to insist that man is also more than an animal, in whom "Nature endeavored not merely

It is not to our purpose to explicate further this view as it is formulated in Strauss' old age. But even in his important earlier works the idea of the species, understood in a more recognizably hegelian way, was of central significance in Strauss' constructive religious thought: The idea of Humanity, and not the individual Jesus of Nazareth, is the true content of christology. "The key to the whole of christology," Strauss says in the conclusion to the Leben Jesu, is that

> as subject of the predicate which the church assigns to Christ we place, instead of an individual, an idea; but an idea which has existence in reality, not in the mind only, like that of Kant.

Strauss draws upon his hegelianism to insist that the idea, to have any efficacy in the real world, cannot be an abstract ideal. Man,

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(continued from p. 280) to exalt but to transcend herself." The upward thrust of the evolutionary process has carried this creature into quite another dimension, characterized by mind, moral will, aesthetic capacities, etc. Man can and must subordinate the brute within himself, and in Nature, to his higher capacities. Strauss is confident that the latter must gain the precedence, for Science itself testifies that progress is the Law of Nature. (Ibid., pp. 161-170 [Blind Tr., pp. 278-294]) The pessimistic extravagances of a Schopenhauer may be valuable to restrain too easy-going an optimism, "but every true philosophy is necessarily optimistic". (Ibid., p. 96 [Blind Tr., p. 167]) We ought to fasten our attention on the lovely attributes of man, and avoid morbid preoccupations with the promptings of the glands. Strauss admits, for example, that the career of his great poetic hero, Goethe, had its seamier side. However: "In Goethe was exactly the opposite of that coquettish cynicism which prompted the author of the Confessions to lay bare his lower while draping his higher nature: he, on the contrary, veiled that which shrinks from sight, in order to concentrate attention on the humanly significant." (Ibid., p. 215 [Blind Tr., p. 372])

This view of man's fundamental problem as the struggle between the sensual-biological and the spiritual-intellectual was not merely a late development; Darwin only confirmed a view which Strauss had held essentially throughout. In the Leben Jesu of 1835, for example, Strauss declares that Schleiermacher's attribution of sinlessness to Jesus "cannot be brought to accord with the laws of human existence", since sensuality is one of these laws. " . . . for to man, in consequence of his agency being liable to guidance by the motives of the senses as well as of the reason, the possibility of sinning is essential." (Leben Jesu, II, p. 693 [Eliot Tr., p. 772]) Strauss never really does justice to Hegel's doctrine of alienation.

for example, cannot attain identity with the divine nature unless he is already in some sense identical with it; since otherwise the estrangement would so characterize every man that he cannot even desire, and much less strive for, such a reconciliation. But all men, qua men. do in fact participate in the idea of Humanity, which is at one with the divine, though most men have not consciously recognized this fact. The consciousness of men has been estranged from the unity in which they are in fact at one with one another and with the divine, because their consciousness has been directed toward their own particularity, toward sensuality, toward merely natural existence. Human history is the process in which men have gradually grasped the divine-human unity of which they have been a part all the while, in which Humanity has gradually triumphed in men's self-consciousness over nature, sensuality, the infections of mere particular existence. The merely natural and sensual life is the negation of the Geist of Humanity, but this negation is itself negated "by the kindling within (man) of the idea of Humanity", by which "the individual man participates in the divinely human life of the species". It is in this emergent triumph that "Humanity is the union of the two natures . . . the worker of miracles . . . the sinless existence", etc. - the true subject of the christological predicates. Having attained this standpoint, we are no longer bound to attribute special significance to any individual man as such, regarding him as a God-man in a unique sense. Indeed, it is precisely this preoccupation with the individual as such which has been overcome.

> Thus if we know the incarnation, death and resurrection, the duplex negatio affirmat, as the eternal circulation, the infinitely repeated pulsation of the divine life, what special importance can attach to a single fact, which is but a mere sensible image of this unending process? Our age demands to be led in christology to

the idea in the fact, to the race in the individual.[1] This christological standpoint constituted the real cutting edge of Strauss' own "good sword", which he occasionally blunted by his desire to do some homage to Jesus of Nazareth, but which he always sharpened again when he returned to his characteristic way of thinking. He intended that this sword should cut the nerve of any special christological claim made on behalf of the individual Jesus.

I think it can fairly be said that Strauss did not preserve the subtlety of Hegel's doctrine; indeed the subtlety is lost already in his view of the implicit unity of the divine and the human. For Strauss this means that the human species as an ideal whole is divine, and each man participates in this whole in an incomplete and one-sided way. Strauss does clarify his view somewhat, in response to criticism, in the Glaubenslehre. He does not mean, for example, that a man participates in the human species merely in virtue of his assumption of the physical forms and functions of manhood. An animal participates in its species in this way because the idea of its species is itself limited to the biological, excluding the capacity for knowledge, etc. But for a man the limits of his merely individual existence can be considerably broadened in virtue of the fact that he is able to grasp, in the mode of knowledge, the attainments of other members of the species, past and present. Though he is not limited as an animal as to his own particular existence, however, he cannot in this way completely overcome the opposition between himself as an individual and the idea of the species. No knowledge of another individual or individuals can effect his reconciliation to the divine. Only when he grasps the species as a whole in the knowledge that the divinity is identical with it, is he reconciled with the divine. But then he himself will be the God-man, a possibility which must be open to all or to none, and cannot be the exclusive possibility of merely a single individual or a possibility to be obtained through a single individual.[1] The significance which church teaching has attributed to Christ is like its teaching concerning the fall of an individual Adam, simply a failure to attain the standpoint of Philosophy. Religious representation has fancifully pictured as two individuals, Adam and Christ, the tension between alienation and reconciliation, sin and salvation, which is in fact present "in each atom of Humanity and its history".[2]

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[1] Leben Jesu, II, pp. 709-713 (Eliot Tr., pp. 779-781). Cf. Kant's attribution of the christological predicates to Humanity in the sense of the complete moral perfection of Reason as such, regardless of whether it is embodied in any actual men or not, p. 25n above. Strauss criticizes this position on the familiar hegelian grounds: "Science has perceived that to convert ideas simply into obligatory possibility, to which no reality corresponds, is in fact to annihilate them. . . . nothing can come into existence which does not already essentially exist; and therefore... it is not to be required of man that he should reconcile himself with God and assimilate his sentiments to the divine, unless this reconciliation and this assimilation are already implicitly [an sich] effected." Leben Jesu, II, p. 703 (Eliot Tr., pp. 776-777).

iv. Strauss' Separation of Hegel's Christological Conclusions from His Speculative Premises

In denying to the individual Jesus Christ any decisive significance in the reconciliation of God and man, Strauss is quite aware that he is departing from Hegel's view. We have noticed that Strauss' hegelianism is hardly identical with the philosophy of Hegel. He did not intend that it should be, though, as we have suggested, he did not recognize the extent to which his amendments alter the whole

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1. Glaubenslehre, II, pp. 229-232, in reply to Schaller.
2. Ibid., II, pp. 71-74.

character of the System. But Strauss does not intend to correct Hegel from some independent standpoint, but from the standpoint which he takes to be the essential basis of Hegel's own System. Thus, in the concluding dissertation of his Leben Jesu, Strauss admits that Hegel tried to reconcile his own speculative view with the traditional christology, and thus gave the right-wing hegelian dogmaticians, e.g. Marheineke and Rosenkranz, some justification for doing the same. But the difficulty is that Hegel had failed to carry out rigorously the implications of his own fundamental outlook at this point. Since this is a point upon which Strauss himself has labored for some time, he feels prepared to set the matter straight.

Strauss precedes his correction with an interpretation of Hegel's own christology. He begins this exposition by observing that "the true and real existence of Geist" is neither to be found in the infinite God as such nor the finite man as such, but in the "God-man", "in the self-impartation and re-appropriation between the two, which on the part of God is revelation, on the part of man religion". But even when man had reached the level of religious maturity at which he is able to grasp the truth of his own unity with God, he was still not in a position to receive this truth in its ideal form. Hence,

> since religion is the form in which the truth presents itself to the popular mind . . . this truth must appear in a commonly-understandable manner, as a fact obvious to the senses; in other words, there must appear a human individual who is recognized as the visible God.

After the life and death of this individual, which Strauss sketches in hegelian terms, this individual is resurrected, so that the God-man

> becomes a part of the general consciousness; and the church must repeat spiritually, in the souls of its members, those events of his life which he experienced externally.

The believer, that is to say, must suppress his mere particularity and his merely sensual existence, "inwardly, as Christ did outwardly" by his death, so that ultimately the believer

> may become, in so far as he is Geist, identical with himself, and participate in the bliss and glory of Christ.[1]

Strauss interprets Hegel's view of the person and work of Christ exclusively in terms of what I have called "divine pedagogy" (Chapter V, § iii above). Christ is simply the exemplar, the particular specimen of the divine-human unity which is provided for examination in order to make men aware of their own unity with the divine. He is in no sense the one in whom God and man are concretely reconciled; the complication which we have found in Hegel at this point has been brushed aside.

It becomes easy for Strauss to show, then, claiming with some justification to stand upon Hegel's own essential view when it is made consistent, that no unique Incarnation in a single individual is necessary at all. The idea of an individual Incarnation has arisen from within the consciousness of the community, by a development within its own immanent Geist, and has been mythologically projected upon Jesus of Nazareth. A unique and genuine historical Incarnation in this individual himself is not necessary, and is not possible.

> Though I may conceive that the divine Geist in a state of renunciation and abasement becomes the human, and that the human nature in its return into and above itself becomes the divine; this does not help me to conceive more easily, how the divine and human natures can have constituted the distinct and yet united portions of an historical person. Though I may see the human mind in its unity with the divine, in the course of the world's history, more and more completely establish itself as the power which subdues nature; this is quite another thing than to conceive a single man endowed with such power for individual, voluntary acts. Lastly, from the truth that the suppression of the natural existence is the resurrection of the Geist, can never be deduced the bodily resurrection of an individual.[2]

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1. Leben Jesu, II, pp. 704-707 (Eliot Tr., pp. 777-778).
2. Ibid., II, pp. 708-709 (Eliot Tr., p. 779).

This drawing of the line does not constitute a rejection of the proper standpoint of speculative Philosophy; rather, "we reject only that which does not follow from the premises". The union of the divine and human natures does not imply an individual Incarnation. More than that, as Strauss attests in an often-quoted remark,

> This is not at all the manner in which the Idea is accustomed to realize itself, to pour out all its fullness on one exemplar and to be miserly toward all others, to impress itself perfectly on this one and always, on the contrary, only imperfectly on all the rest: rather, it loves to spread its riches among a multiplicity of exemplars which reciprocally complete one another, in an alternation in which individuals posit and then transcend themselves. And is this no true realization of the Idea? is not the Idea of the unity of the divine and human natures a real one in a far higher sense, when I regard the whole race of mankind as its realization, than when I single out one man as such a realization? is not an Incarnation of God from eternity a truer one than an Incarnation limited to a particular point of time?[1]

It follows that Humanity is, as we have seen, the true content of christology.

The controversy which surrounded the brief conclusion of the Leben Jesu forced Strauss to develop his doctrine more clearly in relation to Hegel. In fact, the re-examination caused momentary lapses, as we have seen. But in the Glaubenslehre he stands firmly on the conclusion of the Leben Jesu, even quotes part of it and declares that it is the only intelligible outcome of the speculative Philosophy of Religion.[2] Hegel's own doctrine is painstakingly examined, and it is declared that, on Hegel's own terms, the decisive climax in the unification of the divine and human natures occurs in the self-consciousness of the believers, a unification for which the idea of the Incarnation in Jesus can serve only as an occasion.

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[1] Ibid., I, p. 709 (Eliot Tr., pp. 779-780).

[2] Glaubenslehre, II, pp. 214-215, 220, 240.

> Where Hegel comes to speak of this turning-point in the history of religion and of the world, he nowhere construes it as the self-consciousness of one such individual, but always only as the consciousness of those for whom that individual was the God-man.[1]

Again, the story of Jesus may have served as a kind of paradigm of the divine reconciliation for those who believed him to be the God-man. But Strauss insists that on Hegel's terms the story of this individual can never consistently be regarded as anything more than an occasion in this sense; Jesus' life and work cannot be conceived to be essential to this reconciliation in principle. Whatever may once have been his importance in fact, the story of Jesus, Strauss argues, has lost any decisive importance for the modern religious consciousness.[2]

To Rosenkranz' charge that Strauss, in insisting that the species of Mankind is the bearer of the Idea, has denied that the Idea can express itself in an individual man, Strauss replies, both in the Streitschriften and in the Glaubenslehre, that he has done nothing of the sort. The issue is not whether individuals can be bearers of the Idea; as for that, Strauss agrees that it is the ultimate achievement of Geist that they can be. What Strauss denies is that it can ever be proven on speculative grounds that "one single individual must exclusively be the full realization of the Idea", through whom alone it can be communicated to others.[3] In other words, Strauss denies that the self-actualization of Geist can be dependent upon any particular historical fact. Hegel himself, Strauss admits in the Streitschriften, is ambiguous in this matter. Is the "evangelical fact" of Jesus' life and work, for Hegel, really as such and in itself "the Truth"? Or is "the embodiment of the Idea in that single fact . . . only a formula of which consciousness makes use in forming its Notion"? We have found that this is indeed a nice question of Hegel-exegesis. But whatever one may decide in interpreting Hegel, the question remains what his view ought to have been, on his own premises. If right-wing dogmaticians

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[1] Ibid., II, p. 218. See pp. 215-221.

[2] Ibid., II, pp. 333-336.

[3] Ibid., II, p. 221. See also p. 327. Strauss cites a similar reply in the Streitschriften, 3. Heft, pp. 125f.

> appeal to Hegel and declare that he would not have recognized himself in my book as an expression of his meaning, they say nothing which is not in accordance with my own convictions. Hegel was personally no friend to historical criticism. It annoyed him, as it annoyed Goethe, to see the historic figures of antiquity, on which their thoughts were accustomed lovingly to dwell, assailed by critical doubts. Even if it was in some cases wreaths of mist which they took for pinnacles of rock, they did not want to have this forced upon their attention, nor to be disturbed in the illusion from which they were conscious of receiving an elevating influence.[1]

Strauss' point here, of course, is that Hegel's christology will not stand the light of critical-historical scrutiny, and the critical-historical method is the only basis for establishing whether something happened in fact. Philosophy can in no case decide the question of historical fact. In that respect the best that it can do is to show that, in order for the System to be intelligible, a certain event must necessarily have happened.

> And in regard to this, what I assert is that from the general System of the hegelian philosophy it by no means necessarily follows that such an event must have happened, but that from the standpoint of the System the truth of that history from which actually the conception arose is reduced to a matter of indifference.

This judgment, I think, is a mistake, unless Hegel's philosophy is simply collapsed into its idealistic pole, overlooking Hegel's claim that its source is precisely "the facts", in this case the historical fact. This is what Strauss has done.

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[1] This and the following quotations from the Streitschriften are taken from Schweitzer, op. cit., pp. 113-115, who quoted them from Streitschriften, Drittes Heft (1837), pp. 55-126.

However, Strauss implicitly raises here a weighty question. Can a philosophy which issues in a necessary dialectical movement within universal self-consciousness be anything but idealistic in ultimate presupposition? If the Idea is the starting-point which precedes all attention to supposed factual sources, are these sources not reduced to mere occasions for the development of self-consciousness in accordance with the Idea? At any rate, Strauss raises a severe dilemma, which we have noticed previously in other forms. If a philosophy claims to reason from universal, i.e. categoreal, conditions, is it not in fact trapped in its own universality? And if it forsakes such categoreal conditions, and rests any crucial part of its system on unique historical events, is it not then subject to being undercut completely at any time by scientific historical criticism? Strauss does not explicitly raise this radical question, but his reply to his hegelian critics did in fact place them on the horns of this dilemma. He himself, being convinced that the Hegelian system was fundamentally idealistic, and based entirely upon categoreal conditions, can quite consistently say that the Gospel event is a matter of indifference to this system.

> It may have happened, but it may just as well not have happened, and the task of deciding on this point may be calmly handed over to historical criticism.

For philosophy, conceived in this way, is quite independent of unique events, has no vested interests in the deliverances of criticism beyond the fact that it may be deprived of an illustration here and there. Thus, if it is true that the philosophy of religion has nothing to fear from the historical sciences, that its judgments can be produced quite independently of them, it is also true that the truth of any event, in this case the Gospel event, "cannot be proved, whether in whole or in part, from philosophical considerations".[1] Thus the claims made on behalf of the historical Jesus are historical claims, to be judged on the basis of historical criticism, and the conclusion of Strauss' historical criticism to these claims is a firm "Nein" which must stand regardless of what Hegel was led to say. Historical science has spoken, and science is supreme with respect to matter of fact.

Two questions must be asked about this procedure, even if one agrees (as, for example Kierkegaard was to agree) with Strauss' separation between the unique matter of fact, i.e. the historical event, and the philosophical system. First, is Strauss' historical-critical "science" so very innocent of philosophical presupposition, so very neutral, as Strauss would apparently like for it to be considered? I have already suggested that it was not. His own enunciation of his fundamental critical principles makes it clear that his "scientific" criticism assumes, as perhaps any science must assume as a working hypothesis if it is to be an organized body of empirically verifiable material, a dogmatic naturalism. We have already discussed this, and have shown that the procedure in itself rules out any unique divine self-disclosure in principle. This naturalism which is the basis for Strauss' critical principles, and the idealism which is (in his early years at least) the basis for his metaphysical and religious speculation, have combined to deny that Jesus could be a unique divine incarnation at the very outset. The question is begged from the beginning. Even if the claim were true, Strauss would have no machinery, either critical or speculative, with which to handle it. Being a man who prided himself on his scientific rigor, Strauss determined that this meant that the claim must be impossible; what the machinery cannot handle cannot be real.

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[1] We are still quoting from the Streitschriften citations in Schweitzer, op. cit., pp. 113-115.

Second, is the claim that Jesus was the Christ a claim which could be affirmed or denied by the scientific examination of the historical event? This is a delicate and many-sided question. Certainly the christological claim made on behalf of Jesus has traditionally rested, at least in part, on certain miracles, certain mighty works which this man was said to have performed. Now, it is one of the peculiarities of the historical science (if history can ever be a science) that the conclusiveness of its most considered judgments is in inverse ratio to the antiquity and paucity of extant materials relating to the events which it attempts to treat. Its judgments are never absolutely beyond doubt, because of the selectivity of its sources and the frailties of the primary witnesses upon which it must depend. The miracles can therefore not be absolutely denied on any strictly empirical grounds; but in the light of the predispositions of the witnesses, the conflicts of the accounts, the prominence of oral transmission etc. it may be that the probabilities can be heavily weighted against them. I do not mean to settle this question at all. My point is, that even though the scientific critical-historical inspection cannot be absolutely conclusive in the nature of the case, nevertheless such claims as the healing-narratives are in principle inspectable. In regard to these, we are in the domain of public facts; if a photographer had been there he could have taken a picture of what actually did happen. Our available instruments are less exact. But when Strauss claims on the basis of his scientific criticism that such-and-such a healing probably did not take place, this is a judgment that can be combatted or concurred in legitimately only on literary-historical grounds.

But does the claim that Jesus was the redeeming God-man depend upon whether he did heal the blind man, or on whether he was conceived without a human father, or on any of the other aspects of the traditional story that are, in principle, empirically inspectable? If so, then faith, if it is serious, must wait upon the best available judgments of literary and historical criticism. But I think the answer to this question must ultimately be No. Suppose all the miracle stories were true; would this prove that the claim of the Gospel is true, that Jesus was the God-man, God's own act in which man is redeemed from sin and reconciled to God' It clearly would not. A phenomenon he would no doubt be, but not therefore the redeeming God-man, necessarily. Of course the mighty works were taken to be Messianic signs; one who believes that Christ was indeed the Messiah cannot deny these signs out of hand. Nevertheless the messiahship, the redemptive God-manhood, cannot depend on the signs, for the following reason: The heart of this claim is that God acted here, decisively, redemptively. Is God's acting inspectable? This is not the same kind of question we faced with respect to the miracle narratives; with these it must be said that they cannot in fact be inspected except by the indirect and inconclusive methods of the historical sciences, but that they were nevertheless in principle inspectable. But that God acted is not, in itself, inspectable, either in fact or in principle. Then the Incarnation and the work of redemption are, ultimately, non-historical? No, they are historical, they are events which occurred among men, at a certain time and a certain place. What happened, the events in which we are redeemed, are certainly public events, inspectable in principle. But that we are redeemed in these events, i.e. that God has acted here, is certainly a supra-historical dimension of these historical events. This is by no means to "idealize" these events, i.e. to remove their historical character. But the fear of "idealizing" must not lead one to insist so forthrightly on the historical nature of the redemptive events that one obscures the supra-historical origin and power of these events. We shall return to this subject again, and shall develop further the position here adumbrated. Our purpose here has been simply to call into question Strauss' apparent assumption that the traditional christological claim must ultimately be accepted or rejected on the basis of the deliverances of "critical-historical science". This conception appears to me to rest on a profound misunderstanding of the nature of the claim.

VII. FEUERBACH AND MARX: MAN AND HISTORY SET AGAINST "THEOLOGICAL" IDEALISM

Even when Strauss was attacking Hegel's attempt to incorporate positive religion into speculative Philosophy, he did not consider that he was departing essentially from the hegelian position; indeed he intended to preserve the System, with its orientation in universalistic theology and absolute idealism, from what seemed to him to be unjustified accretions. The attacks on the hegelian philosophy by Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx were considerably more radical, since they attacked the theological and idealistic orientation of the hegelian dialectic itself. To be sure, these "anti-hegelians" never ceased being hegelians, since the thought of neither man would have been possible without the background of the hegelian dialectic of alienation and reconciliation. Indeed, the problem of man and its resolution were grasped by them in a manner far more "dialectical" than was the case with Strauss. While they intended to depart radically from the idealistic basis of the System, as Strauss had not, the use of the dialectical method of Hegel is far more evident in their thought than in the thought of Strauss. In fact, they attempted to divorce the dialectic from its theological-idealistic presuppositions, to embrace the method without the idealistic System.

Of course, there are enormous differences in thought between Feuerbach and Marx, differences even in their relation to the philosophy of Hegel. However, these differences become most evident in their later development. During the early 1840's, the period in which they are of primary interest for our purposes, only the seeds of the later divergence had been sown, though the spheres of their respective interests were already quite distinct. At that time the basis for their attack on Hegel was virtually common to both. Since this basis was first defined by Feuerbach, and since Feuerbach's critique centered on the theological questions raised by Hegel, our primary concern will be with him. Marx' extension of the feuerbachian critique to other areas will be treated in § iii, and the direction which Marx took in opposition to Feuerbach will be only briefly discussed in the final section.

Hegel's dialectic of alienation and reconciliation, Feuerbach and Marx agree, is itself alienated from reality because of its idealistic orientation and presupposition. Hegel's doctrine of the identity of thought and being, for example, is only a slightly disguised form of an old theological error. Just as theology, Feuerbach explains, had denied the reality of the world in its affirmation of God as the only unequivocally real Being, so Hegel had reduced concrete being to an attribute of thought.

> Speculative philosophy has merely *universalized*, has only made into an attribute of thought, of the *Notion in general*, what theology made into an *exclusive attribute of the Notion of God*. The identity of thought and being is therefore merely the expression of the *divinity of Reason* - the expression for the claim that thought or *Reason is the absolute* being, the *embodiment of all truth* and reality, that *nothing stands in opposition* to Reason, rather that Reason is everything, as in theology proper God is everything, i.e. all essential and genuine existence. But a *being which is not distinguished from* thought, a being which is only a *predicate* or determination of Reason, is a being which is only an *abstraction of thought*, but in truth *no* being.[1]

Hegel has reconciled thought and being, Feuerbach and Marx say over and over again, only by reducing being - matter, nature, man, history -

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[1] Ludwig Feuerbach, "Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft", § 24; published in a modern edition in Ludwig Feuerbach, *Kleine philosophische Schriften* (1842-1845), Herausgegeben von Max Gustav Lange (Leipzig: Verlag Felix Meiner, 1950), pp. 128-129. Feuerbach was fond of underscoring.

to thought. The truth is, though, that being, concrete reality, has priority to thought, thought arises out of being, Geist develops out of nature; instead of setting the finite aside in favor of the infinite, the task of philosophy is to find the infinite in the finite, to begin, not with philosophy itself, not with thought, but with the non-philosophical, with real things.[1] Only so can philosophy end its own self-alienation. The reconciliations effected by idealistic philosophy are reconciliations in thought only; but the oppositions are between real things. Marx acknowledges his debt to Feuerbach for this insight, and develops it in detail. Hegel had indeed performed great service in demonstrating the estrangement in the forms of existence - but his reconciliation in thought had only left the estranged realities as they were.[2] The only result was that thought was estranged from reality in this "reconciliation", lulled by its own illusions into complacent accommodation to things as they are.

We shall not attempt to rehearse here, completely and in detail, all the criticisms of Hegel developed by these two men.[3] Taking this basic line of criticism as our point of departure, we shall simply explore how Feuerbach and Marx contrive to "set Hegel on his head" in relation to issues already developed in this essay, how they attempt to turn Hegel's own dialectic against him, to quite a different view of religion and of man's alienation and hope for reconciliation.

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[1] Feuerbach, "Vorläufige Thesen zur Reform der Philosophie", Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 61-68 et passim.

[2] Karl Marx, "Nationalökonomie und Philosophie: Über den Zusammenhang der Nationalökonomie mit Staat, Recht, Moral und bürgerlichem Leben", published in part in an accessible edition in Karl Marx, Die Frühschriften, Herausgegeben von Siegfried Landshut (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1953), pp. 252-254, 269-288. We shall generally make use of this edition, which is sufficient for the purpose of our limited discussion of Marx here, despite its irritating omissions and misplacements. The only adequate edition for more detailed work is Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe, in vier Abteilungen, im Auftrage des Marx-Engels Instituts, Moskau, Herausgegeben von D. Rjazanov u. V. Adoratskij (Frankfurt/Berlin: Marx-Engels Archiv Verlagsgesellschaft M.B.H., 1927-1932). The above selection is found in the Gesamtausgabe, I, iii, pp. 153-172.

[3] The overall relation of Feuerbach, and especially Marx, to Hegel is amply discussed in Hook, From Hegel to Marx, Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, and Löwith, Von Hegel zu Nietzsche, to mention only three outstanding examples from an enormous literature in the non-Soviet world alone. There is of course a still more enormous recent literature on this subject by East German and other Communist authors.

i. Feuerbach's View of the True Essence of Christianity

Ludwig Feuerbach was, by common consent, the chief intellectual force in Germany and perhaps in Western Europe from the publication of The Essence of Christianity in 1842 until the revolution of 1848. The reign of Hegel had held sway for at least the two previous decades, and though Feuerbach never considered himself a completely orthodox hegelian, he was still prepared to defend his master against the Antihegel of Bachmann in 1835, and did not break decisively with Hegel until 1839. But for a few heady years after 1842 he was himself the master. "We all became at once Feuerbachians",[1] Friedrich Engels declared long afterward, recalling the enthusiastic reception given The Essence of Christianity among the Young Hegelian circle. Nor was the acclaim merely among the radicals; prominent Old Hegelians also moved to Feuerbach's standpoint.[2] Of course not everyone agreed with Feuerbach, any more than they had with Hegel during his reign; perhaps less. But each man, during the years of his great dominance, was the center of nearly all important philosophical discussion, in relation to whom even his opponents defined themselves.

Of course, there were enormous differences in the achievements of the two men, and in the character of their successive "reigns". Feuerbach's direct influence dwindled rapidly after his hey-day, while Hegel continued considerably in the foreground and pervasively in the background long after his. Furthermore, Hegel had elaborated a system of tremendous scope, while Feuerbach only produced the one book of overwhelming significance, which he devoted to the development of one ingenious idea. Everything he had written previously is of importance only because it leads up to this book, and everything that followed is important only as a clarification of certain aspects of that one book, a clarification which he tried without success to broaden into a cogent system of his own; in fact, most of what follows _The Essence of Christianity_ is an anticlimax. Feuerbach was essentially a man of one idea. But the hitting upon this idea was one of those rare and delightful phenomena in the history of thought which seem to relieve the mind at one stroke of a vast burden of complication, exasperation, and obscurity. Such ideas provide the intellectual world with the sort of relief that must have been experienced by the race in general with the invention of the wheel, or the cathartic. It is easy to understand the exhilaration which this idea must have evoked among those who felt in a position to accept it, the same exhilaration with which the bolder sort of astronomers, weary of epicycles, must have greeted the theory of Copernicus (with whom, indeed, Feuerbach, like Kant, liked to compare himself).[1] With this one daring slash of Ockham's razor Feuerbach appeared to clear away vast, matted snarls of theology and speculative philosophy. His procedure was essentially one of simplification, ingenious reduction.[1]

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[1] Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy (New York; International Publishers, 1941), p. 18.

[2] Löwith mentions in particular Erdmann, Haym, Fischer, and Vischer, in a footnote (966) found on p. 459 of Von Hegel zu Nietzsche.

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[1] E.g. Feuerbach concludes his essay "Zur Beurteilung der Schrift 'Das Wesen des Christentums": "The simplest truths are just the ones which man attains the latest. Thus the entangled Ptolemaic system preceded the simple Copernican system." _Kleine philosophische Schriften_, p. 45.

Feuerbach's great "discovery" is that God is really Humanity, the human species considered as embracing the whole network of relationships between men. This does not mean simply that man's God ought to be Humanity in this sense, but that what man actually does worship and serve as God is in fact Humanity, though men are for the most part unconscious of this fact. That which is the real nature of the race as a whole - i.e. what has been called divinity - is at the same time the deepest yearning and desire of each individual. The transcendent God in whom men have believed is man's projection beyond himself of that which is individually desired and collectively accomplished by men. Thus Feuerbach's idea is a remarkable anticipation of the psychological reduction which is commonplace in our time, according to which God is a Father surrogate, a wish fulfillment, the pleasure principle run wild, the projection of man's nature inflated to infinity etc. In fact Feuerbach's essay is more than a mere anticipation; it is an exposition of this idea that has never been excelled. To place, for example, Freud's _The Future of an Illusion_ alongside _The Essence of_ Christianity, is to see at once that, for all his greatness as a psychologist, Freud was a rank dilettante as an anti-theologian. Feuerbach's psychological principles were, to be sure, little more than shrewd intuitions; Freud could have helped him fill out his picture more systematically. But only a well-trained theologian, as Feuerbach was, could have carried out the program with such comprehensiveness, such richness of illustration, such sophistication, as Feuerbach did. _The Essence of Christianity_ separates the professional anti-theologian from the amateur.

In that work, Feuerbach expresses his thesis in many different ways, and repeats each expression many times with an abundance of confirmatory material drawn from the history of religions, and especially from the history of Christianity, and most especially from the works of Martin Luther. He is in fact so exhilarated by the beautiful simplicity, the sheer explanatory power, of his basic idea that he applies it lavishly everywhere, piling illustration on illustration with an almost inexhaustible enthusiasm. He goes further, in this and other writings, to apply his principle not only to theology, but to the transcendent features of speculative philosophy as well. Not only is it true, as he everywhere proclaims, that "the secret of theology is anthropology", but it must be further asserted that "metaphysics is esoteric psychology". Once one has grasped Feuerbach's basic principle firmly, it is abundantly clear that the status of transcendent features of philosophy is the same as that of the transcendent beings of theology, and that they have indeed the same source in man himself. Man's naive self-inflation and projection of himself in religion lies in the background of the more sophisticated forms taken by this projection in philosophy, so that "the secret of speculative philosophy is theology". By means of his principle, however, Feuerbach means to pull what man has cast into the philosophical and theological skies back down into its native earth, where it can enrich the soil on which men live.[1] The alienation-reconciliation scheme is clearly at work in Feuerbach's procedure. We shall see in the next section that this projection into the "skies" is man's alienation of his true self from his immediate phenomenal self. We shall then see that Feuerbach's own philosophy is intended to contribute to the reconciliation of man with himself by restoring the ultimate principles to men, i.e. by effecting, as he says, the "incarnation" of philosophy. Now we shall examine how Feuerbach goes about establishing the "thesis" - showing that the transcendent in theology - and therefore in philosophy - is really man's own true being.

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 42.

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[1] "Vorläufige Thesen zur Reform der Philosophie", Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 55, 58. See also "Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft" § 54 (Kleine philosophische Schriften, p. 167) et passim.

Feuerbach states his claim most systematically in relation to the classical philosophical problem of subject and predicate. The basic syllogism is briefly stated as follows:

> Now, when it is shown that what the subject is lies entirely in the attributes of the subject; that is, that the predicate is the true subject; it is also proved that if the divine predicates are attributes of the human nature, the subject of those predicates is also of the human nature.[1]

The major premise is the logical truism that the subject is defined by its predicates, developed into the metaphysical claim that the subject is determined by its predicates; this is true "especially in the case of theology" where "the predicates are not accidents, but express the essence of the subject". Feuerbach can draw upon the whole aristotelian tradition in theology to support this premise: God has no accidents, suffers no change in attributes, but is eternally the perfection of every predicate. Feuerbach insists that these predicates must be taken univocally, a proposal that St. Thomas, of course, denies. But Feuerbach would have considered the doctrine of analogy a bit of obscurantism designed to hide the clear anthropomorphism of these predicates. In any case, it does at least in principle follow,

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[1] Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, translated from the German by George Eliot (Marian Evans), with an introductory essay by Karl Barth and a foreword by H. Richard Niebuhr (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1957), p. 25.
I shall cite this translation rather than the German original, both because of its accessibility and its singular adequacy. There is a recent East German edition: Ludwig Feuerbach, Das Wesen des Christentums, Ausgabe in zwei Bänden, Herausgegeben von Werner Schuffenhauer (Berlin: Akademie'Verlag, 1956). I have compared my quotations from the Eliot translation with this edition of the original and have in no case found any compelling reason to alter them.

Feuerbach says, that "there is no distinction between subject and predicate, the one can be put in the place of the other".[1] In fact the actual content of the subject is explicated only in the predicate. It is important for us to note that Feuerbach could have - and probably has - gotten this doctrine from Hegel himself. In discussing the Judgment, Hegel declares that

> It is the predicate which first gives the subject, which till then was on its own account a bare mental representation or an empty name, its specific character and content. In judgments like "God is the most real of all things", or "The Absolute is the self-identical," God and the Absolute are mere names; what they are we only learn in the predicate.

These sentences could have come from Feuerbach himself. Hegel, though, does immediately add a qualification:

> What the subject may be in other respects, as a concrete thing, is no concern of this judgment.[2]

The qualification is important for Hegel. He means more than simply that there are other predicates of God. When God is considered concretely, it is to be recognized that the predicates (the categories of the System) are successive definitions, each aufgehoben in the next until the standpoint of absolute Subjecthood is attained. But Feuerbach hews to what is on Hegel's terms the still very abstract standpoint of the Judgment, which is "an expression of finitude".[3] The infinite standpoint is the standpoint of Subjecthood in which the predicates, as such, are aufgehoben into the Subject. But this basic doctrine of Hegel's is at the heart of what Feuerbach rejected as mere mystification. Feuerbach also sees the dichotomy between subject and predicate as overcome, but for him it is overcome in the opposite way: the subject is absorbed into its predicates! Nor did he deny that this procedure is the standpoint of finitude. That is just what it is. The truth of the infinities of theology and speculation is finitude. The infinite attributes belong in truth to the finite subject.[1] That is only another way of saying that the truth of theology is anthropology. Let us examine the transposition more closely.

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[1] Ibid., p. xxxvii; see also pp. 21-25 et passim.

[2] Enzyklopädie, § 169; see also § 31.

[3] Ibid., § 168.

Granted the major premise that the subject is determined by its predicates, Feuerbach has little trouble showing that this finite standpoint, this anthropological standpoint, does follow. For if the subject of theological statements is determined by its predicates, then the subject is divine only in a derivative sense. It is the predicates which must be essentially divine, infinite.

> Not the attribute of the divinity, but the divineness or deity of the attribute, is the first true Divine Being. Thus what theology and philosophy have held to be God, the Absolute, the infinite, is not God; but that which they have held not to be God is God: namely, the attribute, the quality, whatever has reality.

Clearly, then, the denial of the subject, the special Being which was traditionally held to be divine, is not so important. In affirming the predicates Feuerbach considers that he is holding fast to the genuine religious standpoint of mankind. So the above quotation is followed by the much cited remark that

> Hence he alone is the true atheist to whom the predicates of the Divine Being - for example, love, wisdom, justice - are nothing; not he to whom merely the subject of these predicates is nothing.[2]

Feuerbach is therefore not by his own understanding an atheist, since he affirms the subsistence of these predicates - in Humanity. This affirmation constitutes the minor premise, the demonstration of which occupies him throughout the essay, especially in the first half in which he is expounding the anthropological truth of theology. The task is simply to show that the predicates traditionally ascribed to God are predicates of man.

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[1] "Vorläufige Thesen", Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 61-64.

[2] The Essence of Christianity, p. 21.

It is a simple task to show that fatherhood, love, justice, mercy, and the like are anthropomorphic terms. If someone objects that such terms mean something different, at least in certain respects, when applied to God than when applied to men, Feuerbach replies that insofar as they mean something different than their anthropomorphic significations they have no definite meaning at all. For example, when it is affirmed that God is the Creator, this means that He makes something, just as a workman or artist might. But then theology makes the distinction that God creates out of nothing. This does indeed remove the univocity, but only by making the divine creativity meaningless. So it is with all such designations.

> Only that in which the divine understanding is identical with the human is something, is understanding, is a real idea; while that which is supposed to make it another - yes, essentially another than the human - is objectively nothing, subjectively a mere chimera.[1]

Insofar as these predicates mean anything at all, they are clearly predicates of man. God is love? But love is a human emotion which binds man to man, is the cohesive force of the human species. "A loving heart is the heart of the species throbbing in the individual."[2] Love is indeed divine, for all that, but one ought rather to say therefore that "Love is God, love is the absolute being".[3] Divine Providence? This means simply that God cares for man, treats his destiny as a matter of ultimate significance. Of course! Man cares for man. Man regards his own existence as of infinite value.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 220-221, 101ff.

[2] Ibid., pp. 268-269.

[3] Ibid., p. 264.

> . . . my interest is God's interest, my own will is God's will, my own aim is God's aim - God's love for me nothing else than my self-love deified. Thus when I believe in Providence, in what do I believe but in the divine reality and significance of my own being?[1]

The divine personality? But that is too easy. Of course it is essential to predicate personality of God, since "only in the attribute of personality does the personal man meet with himself, find himself"; "An impersonal God is no God". "In the personality of God man consecrates the supernaturalness, immortality, independence, unlimitedness, of his own personality."[2] The need of the heart for a personal God is fulfilled in Christ, who is the real God of the Christians.[3] Again, to turn to the deeper Christian mysteries, we affirm that in Christ God suffers. Leaving aside the sophistical distinctions involved in the Church's rejection of patripassionism, what are we to say of this? Nothing simpler. Just consult the rule:

> . . . that which in religion is the predicate we must make the subject, and that which in religion is a subject we must make a predicate, thus inverting the oracles of religion; and by this means we arrive at the truth. God suffers - suffering is the predicate - but for men, for others, not for himself. What does this mean in plain speech? Nothing else than this: to suffer for others is divine; he who suffers for others, who lays down his life for them, acts divinely, is a God to man.[4]

Any other questions?

As Feuerbach sees it, there are two poles of the traditional belief in God, corresponding of course to a similar polarity in human nature itself. On the one hand there is the sensuous, the sensitive, the personal character, the desires and expressions of the "heart"; most of the attributes we have been considering have to do with this first pole. But man has a "head" as well, a rational pole which constitutes his universality, his capacity to transcend his limited position as a personal and self-absorbed being, capable even of transcending his limits in time and space, his materiality. It is this which constitutes his objectivity, as opposed to the subjectivity of the other pole. Reason, the understanding,

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[1] Ibid., p. 105.

[2] Ibid., pp. 98-99.

[3] Ibid., pp. 144, 148.

[4] Ibid., p. 60.

> is that part of our nature which is neutral, impassible, not to be bribed, not subject to illusions - the pure, passionless light of the intelligence. It is the categorical, impartial consciousness of the fact as fact, because it is itself of an objective nature.[1]

Thus as man's sensible and emotive nature is the divine immanence, his reason is the divine transcendence. Hence arise the more abstract characterizations of God: God is infinite, unlimited, eternal, necessary, self existent, independent of the world, the criterion of all truth, the harmonizer of all things, the ruler of nature, the *ens realissimum*, etc. Feuerbach is still enough of an hegelian to regard it as almost self-evident that all these are definitions of man's Reason.[2] Feuerbach does not mean that the reason of each individual man has all these characteristics. He means Reason in general, Reason per se, as it characterizes universal Humanity. Therein lies a problem, which we shall want to explore a bit later.

Feuerbach operates generally in the assertorial mode. He does not provide elaborate proof that these predicates belong to man, that hence humanity is divine; he states it, over and over, and shows by dozens of applications how convenient the thesis is as an interpretive principle. While this does not constitute formal proof, it is a highly persuasive performance. Beyond the demonstrated plausibility of the hypothesis, to which he devotes most of his essay, there are however three other lines of argument which he uses for its confirmation. Two of these arguments are based on a priori principles: The first is based on the principle that one can think only that which is akin to himself. This, at least, is a conservative statement of the principle. Feuerbach himself surely over-states it, even on his own terms:

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 34.

[2] *Ibid*., pp. 34-43, 88, 285-286, 296. See especially "Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft", §§ 6, 13, 17, 24, *Kleine philosophische Schriften*, pp. 88-91, 104, 113-114, 128-129.

> And here may be applied, without any limitation, the proposition: the object of any subject is nothing else than the subject's own nature taken objectively. Such as are a man's thoughts and dispositions, such is his God.[1]

Despite this incontinent statement of the matter - which if accepted as a general theory of knowledge would imply solipsism - Feuerbach has touched on a difficult problem of epistemology. If there is no continuity between God's nature and our own, how can we even form concepts about God? Feuerbach assumes that it would be impossible. He therefore concludes that, for example, if we say with Schleiermacher that God becomes related to man in man's Gefühl, then the Gefühl must itself be divine, which is to say that it is God.[2] Similarly with faith: "Faith in God is the God of man."[3] The same premise is brought into play in his Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft to show that God must be a man, since only men - and not animals - are religious.[1] The more serious form of this argument, however, is stated at the beginning of Feuerbach's treatment of the true essence of religion: Man would feel no disruption, no estrangement from God of the sort implied in religion, were it not for the fact that he is really identical with God.

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[1] Ibid., p. 12.

[2] Ibid., pp. 10, 62-63. One cannot, however, forthwith refer to this as "Feuerbach's definition of God", as William B. Chamberlain does: Heaven Wasn't His Destination: The Philosophy of Ludwig Feuerbach (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1941), p. 46. Feuerbach says so many different things that one must be careful about announcing "Feuerbach's definition of" anything - a fact which has frequently led Chamberlain into confusion. On the very next page, for example (p. 11), Feuerbach remarks that "Gefühl has been adduced here only as an example".

[3] Ibid., p. 127.

> Disunion exists only between beings who are at variance, but who ought to be one, and who consequently in nature, in truth, are one.[2]

This argument - a very important one for establishing Feuerbach's thesis - obviously proceeds from hegelian grounds. Estrangement as a necessary dialectical moment does and must imply some sort of original unity. For Feuerbach this unity is a simple identity - not of the individual to be sure, but of the species to which he belongs - with God.

The second argument is less important, and derives less obviously from Hegel; at least it could derive only in a grossly over-simplified form from the premise of original unity in the hegelian Philosophy of History. As it stands it is closer to being the opposite of the hegelian view that the truth is entirely implicit at the beginning of an historical process. For this argument proceeds on the axiom that "it is only in the origin of a thing that we can discern its true nature".[3] As applied to religion this means that "the nearer religion stands to its origin, the truer, the more genuine it is, the less is its true nature disguised." Thus Feuerbach can consider the anthropomorphism of much primitive religion as a direct confirmation of his theory: "in the origin of religion there is no qualitative or essential distinction whatever between God and man."[4] Feuerbach is required to be rather selective in his choice of "origins" in order to make this thesis stick. In any case, those for whom Feuerbach's axiom is not self-evident would regard this whole line of argument as a textbook example of the genetic fallacy.

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[1] "Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft", § 7, Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 91-94.

[2] The Essence of Christianity, pp. 33, 45.

[3] Ibid., p. 118.

[4] Ibid., pp. 197-198, 179.

The third argument, however, is the most persuasive, and the affinities to Hegel become clear and direct: Feuerbach claimed that his thesis was the logical outcome of the progressive development of religious thought up to his time. This claim does not contradict his principle that the truth of anything is found in its origin. The identity of the divine and human, posited unreflectively at the beginning of religious history and then disguised by theology, comes gradually to self-conscious recognition in the history of theology itself. It has always been implicit. Feuerbach shows in a cursory way how the concept of God has always reflected the social and cultural state of man in any epoch. As man himself is, so he has unconsciously conceived his God.[1] But what was obscure in other religions became much more clear in Christianity, for reasons that would be familiar to any reader of Hegel. Feuerbach simply carries the hegelian argument at this point a step beyond Hegel. God becomes man. God and man are united, identical in Christ. Of course the christological form this affirmation takes is only a representational expression of the truth; but Feuerbach, like Strauss, is enabled with the aid of Hegel to see the kernel of truth in the husk of Vorstellung: God is man. Once this has been admitted in connection with Christ, the absolute incommensurability of God and man has been overcome in principle. Viewing the matter in this way, Feuerbach considered that all he needed to do was to convert the proposition. If God is man, then man is God. Indeed, the converted form of the proposition is obviously the primary form:

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[1] Ibid., pp. 20-21.

> for the descent of God to man is necessarily preceded by the exaltation of man to God. Man was already in God, was already God himself, before God became man, i.e. showed himself as man. How otherwise could God have become man?[1]

There is a footnote to this passage, in which Luther is quoted as confirming this judgment! For what Feuerbach has in mind is the teaching that God has acted out of sheer love for man. But this means that God's act is in fact determined by man. And when the matter is stated in that form it has become quite transparent; Feuerbach's conclusion is clearly seen within it.

> The consciousness of the divine love, or what is the same thing, the contemplation of God as human, is the mystery of the Incarnation.[2]

That God is man - "the mystery of the 'God-man'" - is simply an analytic proposition. The human nature is the object of the divine love, therefore is the content of the divine will, i.e. of the divine nature itself. As we have seen, love is God, God is that which has taken man's well-being to heart.

> "We love God because he first loved us." What, then, is it that I love in God? Love: love to man. But when I love and worship the love with which God loves man, do I not love man; is not my love of God, though indirectly, love of man? If God loves man, is not man, then, the very substance of God? That which I love, is it not my inmost being?[3]

All this Feuerbach finds in the doctrine of the Incarnation, since the Incarnation means that "God exists for man". At least this is the Protestant insight. It had not yet come to full consciousness in Catholicism. Catholicism - "the old Catholicism, which now exists only in books" - still held on to the essentially theological standpoint that God exists for Himself and "man exists for God". As Feuerbach sees it, Catholic morality (the morality of self-abnegation, in which man turns from things human to serve that which is fundamentally not human) had not really taken christology seriously, therefore could still take theology seriously. Protestantism, on the contrary, by assuming the christological standpoint has also assumed the anthropological standpoint. Of course, Protestantism retained "the old supernaturalistic God" in the background, but this God was really contradicted by the essential genius of Protestantism, which is the "absoluteness of man". Here the cry is "grace alone", the sacrament is God's gift to man, God's sacrifice for man, man wins nothing by his self-renunciation, but wins all by God's condescension to man![1] Of course, Feuerbach is able to get this interpretation from the works of Luther. Almost every other page of the text and the Appendix contains quotations from Luther, which Feuerbach cites, not in order to contradict, but in order to show that his conclusion is the logical outcome of Luther's viewpoint. In an essay written a couple of years later (1844) on "Das Wesen des Glaubens in Sinne Luthers" Feuerbach went so far as to claim that Luther's concept of faith was identical with that expounded in The Essence of Christianity![2] Feuerbach knew perfectly well that he was interpreting Luther in an outrageously one-sided way; when Luther speaks of God's condescension to man he speaks from the standpoint of a recipient of grace, presupposing the infinite distance of man from God which man himself has no power whatever to cross. Feuerbach's constant quotation of Luther is obviously executed with an ironical glee - and of course with the conviction that Luther had said the right thing in spite of himself. Luther speaks, for example (in the Heidelberg Disputations), of the theologia crucis, which knows God only in His condescension in Christ, and opposes this theology to the vanity of the theologia gloriae, by which he means the attempt of the older theologians to speak of God as He is in Himself quite apart from the Incarnation. Naturally, Feuerbach is quite willing to agree that the latter is folly - God is known only as man!

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[1] Ibid., p. 50.

[2] Loc. cit.

[3] Ibid., p. 57. See pp. 50-58, 74-79, 144-148.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 336-339 et passim. In fact, Feuerbach says, it is assumed either openly or covertly that the sacrament has no efficacy except through man's faith. This means that faith, which Feuerbach regards simply as a human power, is the real potency of the sacrament, Ibid., pp. 244-246.

[2] Discussed in Löwith, Von Hegel zu Nietzsche, pp. 364-365.

It is safe to say, however, that it was not the reading of Luther which opened up to Feuerbach the possibility of his anthropological reduction of theology. Feuerbach had been able to extract the kernel of "truth" implicit in the older theologies only because a further development had taken place, in which this "truth" had become more explicit. Feuerbach sees his own coup de grace as being more directly the extension of the immanentist character of the whole course of philosophical theology since Descartes, which reached its culmination in Hegel.[1] Thus, for example, when Spinoza made extension an attribute of God he had thereby overthrown the whole outlook of theology proper, with its view of God as super-natural, thus Spinoza was "the Moses of modern free-thinkers and materialists".[2] But from the standpoint of theology proper, his statement that extension is an attribute of God is no more abhorrent than Hegel's that the consciousness (in men) of God is the self-consciousness of God. Hegel had performed the same service in an idealistic form that Spinoza had performed in a materialistic form: As Spinoza had reduced theology to natural philosophy, Hegel had reduced it to anthropology. At least he ought, logically, to have done so. But he avoided this conclusion by clinging to a vestige of the theological point of view and therefore regarding Geist as somehow more than man; i.e. by the estrangement, on Feuerbach's terms, of man from his own Essence.[1] That is, Hegel had equivocated in his doctrine of the identity of the divine and human natures. Feuerbach considered that he was simply completing the job, without equivocation. When he says identity, he means identity! If "man's knowledge of God is God's knowledge of Himself", then clearly God is man. And since the subject and predicate have been shown to be interchangeable, man is God. Therefore "man's knowledge of God is man's knowledge of himself, of his own nature." Away with identity in difference! - by means of which Hegel could have said the same thing without meaning what Feuerbach meant by it. Identity in difference looks profound, but really it is only a confusion, "a perversion, a distortion".[2] So again, as with Strauss, Hegel's doctrine is made "consistent", his profundities excised with his ambiguities - they are not easy to distinguish - and the remainder used against his own intentions.

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[1] Ingeniously surveyed, in a way that serves Feuerbach's own purposes, in "Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft", §§ 10ff; Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 96ff.

[2] Ibid., § 15, p. 110.

Feuerbach considered that the way had been prepared for him, not only by Hegel, but also by Schleiermacher, who with Hegel dominated the theological climate in which Feuerbach lived. Schleiermacher was not to be criticized on Hegel's grounds, that "he made religion into an affair of the Gefühl". In that he was right, against Hegel, whose intellectualistic propensities had kept him from seeing the emotive basis of religion. Schleiermacher is rather to be criticized in that he has been deterred, like Hegel, by his "theological prejudice" from drawing "the necessary consequences of his standpoint, that he did not have the courage" to draw the obvious conclusion:

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[1] Ibid., § 23, pp. 125-128; also "Vorläufige Thesen Zur Reform der Philosophie", Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 55-56.

[2] The Essence of Christianity, pp. 226-231.

> that God is objectively nothing other than the essence of the Gefühl, if the Gefühl is subjectively the basis of religion.[1]

Feuerbach knows that Schleiermacher's is not simply a Gefühl-theology, and also that Schleiermacher means something rather different by the word Gefühl than he does.[2] But then, Feuerbach was only drawing on "the truth" of his predecessors anyway. He sees in each of them a duality, a duplicity. Insofar as they affirm the basic identity of of God and man, and therefore see reconciliation as the reception of a proper possession of man, Feuerbach can consider, with some justice, that his own conclusion is in direct continuity with theirs. Yet insofar as both affirm that reconciliation is a gift from God (who is not man) to man (who is not God), they both hold fast essentially to the position of "theology" proper. Therefore Hegel and Schleiermacher are both on the borderline between the theological and the anthropological understanding of religion, and each occupies, in different ways, the last position possible for theology before falling outright into anthropology. Thus Schleiermacher is "the last theologian of Christianity",[3] and at the same time, "The hegelian philosophy is the last place of refuge, the last rational defense of theology".[1] For Feuerbach's purposes they occupy essentially the same position, embodying approximately the same uneasy compromise between theology and anthropology.

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[1] "Zur Beurteilung der Schrift 'Das Wesen des Christentums'", Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 34-35. See also The Essence of Christianity, p. 186.

[2] Sidney Hook (From Hegel to Marx, pp. 236-237) points out that although Feuerbach characterizes his own position with Schleiermacher's expression, "the feeling of absolute dependence", in his Das Wesen der Religion of 1845, Feuerbach states that he has in mind "no theological, Schleiermachian, misty, indeterminate, abstract feeling . . . it is the sense of the dependent feeling, dependent seeing, in short from all sides and senses dependent knowing man". This statement may not add much to our knowledge of what Feuerbach's doctrine was, but at least the dissociation is clear.

[3] "Zur Beurteilung der Schrift 'Das Wesen des Christentums'", Kleine philosophische Schriften, p. 35.

What Feuerbach considers that he has done, then, is to make an end of the compromise, to expose the real contradiction between the theological and the anthropological standpoints, and to show that the latter is the true standpoint. It is important to observe that Feuerbach did not consider this a destructive conclusion. He considers his anti-theological doctrine as the true inheritor of Christian theology, and as the true essence of Christianity. He has not destroyed Christianity, but has only affirmed its truth. He is not indulging in some new form of religious speculation, but is simply letting the Christian religion itself speak. He does not dictate to religion, as do theology and speculation, but constitutes himself "only its listener and interpreter, not its prompter". He has discovered, he has not invented.

> It is not I, but religion, that worships man, although religion, or rather theology, denies this; it is not I, an insignificant individual, but religion itself that says: God is man, man is God; it is not I, but religion that denies the God who is not man, but only an ens rationis - since it makes God become man, and then constitutes this God, not distinguished from man, having a human form, human feelings, and human thoughts, the object of its worship and veneration. I have only found the key to the cipher of the Christian religion, only extricated its true meaning from the web of contradictions and delusions called theology.[2]

Accordingly, Feuerbach has not, like Bauer and Strauss, simply criticized the scripture or theology of Christianity, but has directed himself to the immediacies of the Christian religion.[3] Its theological expressions have indeed involved imaginative constructions of the understanding or the poetical faculty, but this religion in itself only involved the essential truth, the basic desires, of the human heart.[1] In theology the "head" has dictated to the "heart", and therefore theology has obscured the true basis of religion. "Anthropotheism", on the contrary, by affirming religion's immediate basis has reconciled head and heart by permitting religion to become self-conscious, to understand its own authentic basis.[2]

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[1] "Vorläufige Thesen zur Reform der Philosophie", Kleine philosophische Schriften, p. 73. See also pp. 87-88.

[2] The Essence of Christianity, pp. xxxv-xxxvi.

[3] Ibid., p. xlii.

It has done this in particular by unveiling, freeing from equivocation, Christianity's recognition of the absolute position of love. Love binds man to man, is the solid emotional cement which holds together the human race. Therefore when one loves, one affirms the universal, the human species. But the standpoint of the universal, the species, is the standpoint of reason. Therefore love is in its nature rational. He who loves affirms the unity of the species, the unity of intelligence itself. Love, then, is the real Savior, which frees man from the alienation of "Law" and "Sin". It is love, with its affirmation of Humanity, which reconciles the finite (individual) to the infinite (species), subject with object, a man with his neighbor. That is: Love is the identity of God and man. Love even becomes the criterion of all truth and objectivity, since in love alone man can affirm the objective existence of another; in love sensibility and reason join. One could go on and on. Feuerbach's pages are filled with peons to love. Love is his standpoint, Humanity is his standpoint. In this, above all, he regards himself as the fulfiller of the Christian tradition. Not that love arose only in Christianity; if that were so it would be a merely positive quality, an abstraction founded upon authority. No, love arises out of the nature of man himself, in particular his essence as a sexual being. But it was the great virtue of Christianity to give expression to this universal power of the human heart. Jesus was - as for the young Hegel and many others in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries - the apostle of this universal love. Love, then, is the true essence of Christianity.[1]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 59ff, 121-122, 140ff, et passim. Hook calls attention to the way in which this understanding separates Feuerbach from Strauss. From Hegel to Marx, pp. 244-245. The distinction ought not be pushed too far, however, since Strauss also saw a fundamental truth at the "heart" of Christianity, recognized it as an authentic expression of the human spirit. The "myth" emerges, after all, from the unconscious propensities of the community, according to Strauss. And Strauss, as well as Feuerbach, sees "humanity" as the real content of Christology, and later affirmed with Feuerbach that the "species" (Gattung) was the true object of man's worship, along with Nature.

[2] Vorläufige Thesen zur Reform der Philosophie", Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 69-70. Feuerbach had earlier thought of titling his Essence of Christianity "Know Thyself".

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[1] The Essence of Christianity, pp. 47-49, 53, 156-159, 264-269, 289-292, 330-332. Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 68-70, 145-149, 193-194.

The sexual character of this love, in its basis, is seen in the development of the doctrine of the Mother of God; a feminine principle must be involved in the religion of love, within the nature of God Himself. Thus the relationship among the persons of the Trinity needs the Mother for its fulfillment. When Protestantism turned against the Mother, it was thus the first step to setting aside the Son and the whole Trinity. Ibid., 71-73, 139. This modern-sounding argument, of course, is the direct counter of the relationship between Catholicism and Protestantism developed above. But both accounts of the matter display great psychological shrewdness; and this is what characterizes Feuerbach's whole treatment, rather than a consistent, systematic over-all delineation.

Indeed, "love" itself is allowed to spread and boil until it means almost everything vaguely, and little or nothing definitely. Löwith remarks that "Feuerbach's 'love' remained a sentimental phrase". (Von Hegel zu Nietzsche, p. 94) Even Hook has got to admit that "In attempting to convert his readers to the religion of love, Feuerbach does not hesitate to play hard and fast with terms and definitions" (From Hegel to Marx, p. 252), though Hook then proceeds to play "hard and fast" with a few of his own in defending this "religion"; he does, however, capture the general sense of the program: Within this philosophy of religion, despite its confusions, "there still remains a conception which has inspired humanistic movements from the days of Protagoras to those of Dewey. Its abiding sense lies in its reference to an undefined natural and social whole of which man is an organic part, and which without impinging on his individual freedom, lifts him to a consciousness of a common lot and destiny with other men. . . . It is the unexpressed 'religion' of all who cherish the value of individual personality wherever it may be found . . . from its fire spring all the great social equalitarian ideals which burn in the breasts of men". (p. 254)

Unhappily, though, there are some other things which must be said of Christianity, as an historical phenomenon, and to these we shall now turn. What has been established, however, as the unconscious testimony of all religion, is the thesis that man is God. With this "Notion" established, the moments of estrangement and reconciliation follow in good order.

ii. Feuerbach: Man's Self-Alienation in Positive Religion

Love, we have seen, is the genuine principle of Christianity insofar as Christianity embodies the original nature of religion and of humanity in general, i.e. insofar as it is rational, not "positive". But Christianity is also a positive religion, founded on revelation. God is known to exist only because He reveals Himself, and what God is and what God requires of man is also made known only in revelation. Of course, on the basis of what has been said it will be obvious that the Revealer is none other than man's own nature.

> That which comes from God to man, comes to man only from man in God, that is, only from the ideal nature of man to the phenomenal man, from the species to the individual. Thus, between the divine revelation and the so-called human reason or nature, there is no other than an illusory distinction; . . . And so in revelation man goes out of himself, in order, by a circuitous path, to return to himself![1]

From this statement of the matter, it would appear that the problem of the arbitrariness, the mere givenness, of positive religion would not be so acute. It is, after all, human reason that dictates to itself in revelation. But the human reason which thus dictates appears in an alien form, and that makes all the difference. The "positive" Christian does not say that these dicta are intended to be rational, and can therefore be corrected by reason. No, when they appear in the form of "revelation" they are said to come from God, from outside man. That is, revelation appears in the form of a "fact", a given, incontestable datum. It is therefore no longer subject to the check of reason. Just as it would be futile to "criticise" a tornado because it is irrational, so it is likewise futile to criticize a revelation in this way; in both cases something has been given whose conformity or non-conformity to reason is purely accidental. It is a matter of indifference whether reason and revelation are in agreement or not, since they are in fact incommensurables. A fact is "an impassable limit of the mind", a fact is "a physical force, not an argument - it makes no appeal to the reason".[1] Feuerbach sees, I think correctly, that revelation is considered to be a fact in this sense. There is a question of some systematic importance for Feuerbach's program, just what makes man project his (at least in part) rational nature in this self-contradictory form. Feuerbach doesn't really clear this question up, but he does remark that it is essentially a childlike act, a work of the imagination. But such imaginative projection appears to be an "irresistible power", an "inward necessity" in man.

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[1] The Essence of Christianity, p. 207.

> There is within him an inward necessity which impels him to present moral and philosophical doctrines in the form of narratives and fables, and an equal necessity to represent that impulse as a revelation.[2]

If the impulse is whimsical, this doesn't mean that the results are innocuous. Belief in revelation has indeed had some educational values for man, has had in particular some "beneficial moral effects"; since revelation has a basis in reason, albeit in diluted form, and since its principles are enforced by a high sense of their authority.

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[1] Ibid., p. 205. Marx echoes this observation when he charges that theology simply declares "facts" when explanations are needed. E.g., the basis of sin is the Fall. Marx-Engels, Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe, I, iii, p. 82.

[2] Ibid., p. 208.

However, as young Hegel observed almost fifty years before, and as Kant charged still earlier, the result of this positive form is that the good is done for God's sake, and not for its own sake or - to say the same thing - on the basis of reason. There are "moral actions, but no moral dispositions", since moral rules are "represented as the commandments of an external lawgiver, by being placed in the category of arbitrary laws, police regulations."[1] This is the familiar pattern of self-estrangement. The doing of the good is no longer self-willed, but is forced, strained, unnatural. There is moral slavery. Man must live in fear, "under the Law," with the divine hatchet poised over his neck. All that is perfect is God's. Only evil and blame belong to himself. Furthermore, morality itself is alienated, immoral, passing easily into sophistry, hypocrisy, superstition.[2] What man thinks, believes, does, creates, is not really his own, is no longer grounded in his own nature, in his reason. The assumption is that the universality attaching to reason and to the species is a man's own. But once the principle of revelation is accepted, this universality is no longer a court of appeal. A fact, an event is said to have occurred.

> God revealed himself once for all in the year so and so, and that, not to the universal man, to the man of all times and places, to the reason, to the species, but to certain limited individuals.[3]

The result is that arbitrariness creeps in throughout the oracles of religion. Once the dictum of God rather than the canons of reason becomes the basis of appeal, all respect for truth as such is lost.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 209, 262.

[2] Ibid., pp. 46-47, 97, 202, 246, 260-267, 274.

[3] Ibid., p. 209. This way of stating the alternative is of some interest in itself, but I defer discussion of "universal man" etc. until the next section.

The way is open for superstition and saving ceremonies, for a scripture produced by certain individuals and in a certain epoch received as eternal truth whose barbarities and contradictions must be swallowed whole. Then the tortuous sophistries of theology take over, attempting "with ignominious tricks and evasions" to defend that which tends with every progress in knowledge to grate more and more against men's sense of the truth.

The subjective correlative of revelation, of course, is faith. Faith believes the revelation. As such it is set irreconcilably over against love. Feuerbach devotes his longest chapter to "the Contradiction of Faith and Love"; and this is the most basic chapter in the book, since, in accordance with Feuerbach's principle of the primacy of the anthropological, this contradiction within man is the basis of the contradiction within religion. Love accords with the universal, with the species, with reason. The unity of man with man and of man with God is accomplished in love. Faith, on the contrary, is divisive, arbitrary; faith sets man against man, the adherents of one religion over against the adherents of another, believer against unbeliever, man against his own desires. Faith digs the impassable gulf between man and God, sets the basis for a man's life above and against him. Faith is specific, particularistic, is imprisoned within itself, scornful of the knowledge available to all men. Faith sets duty to God above the common human duties, love for God above common love for men, love of divine precept above love of goodness for its own sake. Faith is not only self-denial, but the denial of man, the sacrifice of man to God.[1] Only by sophistries can the advocates of faith claim that the barbarities committed in the name of religion - holy war, inquisition, persecution - are denials of faith, or not intrinsic to faith. It is the nature of faith to be fanatical, to break the bounds set by good sense, by humanity, by love. "In faith there lies a malignant principle".[1] Faith, the esoteric doctrine, "the religion of the Christian religion", contradicts love, which is its exoteric doctrine, its "morality".[2] Faith, then, directed toward God - i.e. humanity in an estranged form - constitutes the individual man's self-estrangement, his estrangement from reason, from morality, from love.[3]

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[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 247-263, 320-332.

This self-estrangement is not simply a theoretical illusion or a social calamity - though it is also both of these things - but is the basis, personally, of the spiritual pain, the unsatisfied longing of human life. In casting his own essential nature into the heavens, man has given away, thrown away, to God, the treasure which belongs properly to himself. Having given away his own blessedness to God, he no longer knows blessedness as his own. What he attributes to God he denies to himself, and the result is his spiritual misery. The bloody human sacrifice of antiquity is only the explicit form of the true type of religion per se. "To know God and not oneself to be God, to know blessedness and not oneself to enjoy it, is a state of disunity, of unhappiness".[4] It is infinite longing and bloody sacrifice of man's properly human stature. Thus even when he is criticizing Hegel for making Being or Essence a mere universal Notion, separable from things, and is affirming on the contrary that the Notion and the individual existence of things are inseparable, Feuerbach has to admit an exception: Only in human life, and here only in "abnormal, unfortunate cases" there is indeed such a separation.[1] Presumably Feuerbach has in mind those who are the slaves of God. God becomes the "alter ego", the "lost half" of man, namely his essence, his species. Not only does man thus deprive himself, but he deprives nature also. God is the truth of things, the world, then, a "mere piece of mechanism". The result of this rending asunder of essence and existence is twofold: On the one hand there is the misery we have been discussing; on the other hand there is a kind of cow-like contentment arising from the fact that the believer, in possessing God, possesses all things. The zest, the struggle of life is lost, since all that is wanting is supplied by his God. Indeed, the believer's interest is entirely practical, subjective. Rent asunder as he is, he desires nothing but his own salvation, which he finds in God. This is the result of religion's absorption in "heart" without the qualifying operation of "head", faith without love, absorption in God instead of in nature and in the species. The absorption in God is really self-absorption, absorption in the species only insofar as it is considered as this individual, this God who serves my own personal desires. Lost is the sense of wonder in things for their own sakes, the joys of the "aesthetic", "theoretical" life.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 252, 257-260, 321.

[2] Ibid., p. 263.

[3] Ibid., pp. 240-246, 296, et passim.

[4] Ibid., pp. 18, 26-31, 272, et passim; "Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft", § 29, Kleine philosophische Schriften, p. 140.

> That which we have designated as the practical or subjective view is not pure, it is tainted with egoism, for therein I have relation to a thing only for my own sake; neither is it self-sufficing, for it places me in relation to an object above my own level. On the contrary, the theoretic view is joyful, self-sufficing, happy; for here the object calls forth love and admiration; in the light of the free intelligence it is radiant as a diamond, transparent as a rock-crystal. The theoretic view is aesthetic, whereas the practical view is unaesthetic. Religion therefore finds in God a compensation for the want of

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1. Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft", § 27; Kleine philosophische Schriften, p. 133.

an aesthetic view.[1]

This identification of Feuerbach with the theoretical and aesthetic point of view is of special interest because of subsequent criticisms of this point of view by Marx and Kierkegaard. Feuerbach's critics would have agreed, a little maliciously, that he was correct in seeing himself fundamentally in this light.

It is clear that for Feuerbach the supernatural is the anti-natural, just as the superhuman is the anti-human. Thus the worship and service of God is not only man's alienation from himself, but from nature as well. Thus the religiously self-estranged man can no more love and accept nature for its own sake than virtue for its own sake. Of course he is not really free from nature; his sense of freedom from nature is no true freedom, but is based on feeling and imagination, on his practical and self-centered outlook. He is constrained to deny nature per se; he can affirm it only in a form in which it ultimately serves his own narrow-minded interests. Thus in the doctrine of creation, he demands that nature be conceived as derived from and controlled by will, by personal agency; which demand is only a backhanded admission of his own sense of estrangement from nature.[2] The denial of nature in the doctrines of Christ's

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[1] The Essence of Christianity, p. 196; see pp. 185-187, 193-196. There is a certain unevenness, and even contradiction, in use of terms throughout Feuerbach's works. Thus Christianity is said both to be the standpoint of unhappiness and the standpoint of joy which overlooks the world. Here his own view is the self-contented theoretical, elsewhere it is said to be the standpoint of pain and passion etc. over against the merely theoretical, "thinking" view of Hegel ("Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft", § 33, Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 145-147). Again, the demonical thing about religion is said to be that man sacrifices himself to God, and at the same time God is said to be, in religion, a divine bellhop existing for no other purpose than the service of man. The problem is partly an inconsistency in the use of terms; also, he is of course treating religion in its different stages, and the problem of self-estrangement takes different forms in these different stages. Still Feuerbach doesn't really try to clear up all these inconsistencies (I have mentioned only a few).

[2] The Essence of Christianity, pp. 103-106, 112-119, 125ff, 150, 287-289, 299-303.

Resurrection, of his immaculate conception, and of personal immortality, is only too transparent.[1] In some of his most eloquent pages, Feuerbach further shows with some ingenuity how the sacraments fit into this estrangement from nature. In the sacraments ordinary material objects are - correctly - said to be sacred, to have healing, nourishing, saving power. The truth of that perception, so far as it goes, is one of Feuerbach's most passionate convictions. Feuerbach had an almost mystical sense of appreciative dependence on the material world; if he was a materialist it was mostly in this really mystical sense. So the religious are right in seeing water, bread, wine, as sacramental elements. But then the estrangement from nature takes over and dilutes, mitigates, this profound insight; just as faith dilutes, mitigates, imprisons, love. The elements are divine only insofar as their natural being is denied, only insofar as supernatural properties are attached to them. Thus illusions are concocted, which veil the real saving nourishment of water, bread, and wine. The situation is just as Feuerbach has shown it to be throughout religion:

> The object or subject in the religious syntax is always a real human or natural subject or predicate; but the closer definition, the essential predicate of this predicate is denied. The subject is sensuous, but the predicate is not sensuous, i.e. is contradictory to the subject.[2]

This basic contradiction, stemming from the alienation from nature, is indeed at the heart of the contradiction in the traditional doctrine of God. The things that are attributed to God would be intelligible only if applied to a really sensuous, external being; indeed the claim of existence itself is intelligible only if applied to a sensuous object, with definite contours in space and time. But then theology must deny just this externality, this sensuousness, which would make the concept of God intelligible. Kant had pointed to this contradiction in concluding that the divine Being with this special sort of "existence" could not be vindicated by rational proof, since there is no sensuous material to serve as a basis for knowledge. Kant was clearly right as against Hegel's effort to deny his conclusion. But Kant had not gone far enough: "A necessary consequence of this contradiction is Atheism."[1] No, solid ground for the affirmation of existence can be found only when man is again restored to Nature. This concern was of great importance for Feuerbach, since he saw his own fundamental stand, over against religion and hegelianism, as the standpoint of nature, as well as Humanity. It almost goes

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[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 135-139, 315-317.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 240; pp. 236-246, 275-278, 318-320.

It almost goes without saying that the (traditional, pre-Feuerbachian) Christian is also estranged from that other pole of Feuerbach's concern, Humanity. By serving the species only in an estranged form, as an individual, as God, the Christian has cut himself off from the species as such. If one's "all" is in God, one has no need of the species, of human culture and society. One is no longer bound to humanity, to its structures and functions, to the ethical universalism grounded therein. One lacks the "poverty" of the solitary man who must seek his fulfillment in fellow-feeling and culture. Monasticism and celibacy are the authentic expressions of genuine supernatural Christianity.[2] In his development of this motif there is an acute anticipation of Kierkegaard's view of Christianity as the "teleological suspension of the ethical". Once one obeys God rather than man, one is no longer bound in the genuinely moral way, to the role one ought to fulfill in virtue of one's membership in universal Humanity. On the contrary:

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[1] Ibid., pp. 200-201. See pp. 91-93 where Feuerbach argues that there is a similar contradiction in attributing to God personal, but non-sexual, being.

[2] Ibid., pp. 160-169, 174, 216-217, 262-263, 288-289, 308-315, 323.

> Separation from the world, from matter, from the life of the species, is therefore the essential aim of Christianity.[1]

Here is stated in the broadest sense the "malignant principle" in faith.

But again, we can see that Feuerbach denies only in order to affirm. His positive task was to point the way out of this impasse, to the reaffirmation of the world and of man.

> He who says no more of me than that I am an atheist, says and knows nothing of me. The question as to the existence or non-existence of God, the opposition between theism and atheism belongs to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but not to the nineteenth. I deny (negiere) God. But that means for me that I deny the negation of man. In place of the illusory, fantastic, heavenly position of man which in actual life necessarily leads to the degradation of man, I substitute the tangible, actual, and consequently also the political and social position of mankind. The question concerning the existence or non-existence of God is for me nothing but the question concerning the existence or non-existence of man.[2]

Marx' atheism is of the same order:

> Atheism has no other meaning than the denial of this non-essentiality [of man in himself], for atheism is a *negation of God*, and posits through this negation the *existence of man*.[3]

This is the issue to which we find Feuerbach giving eloquent expression again and again: Feuerbach will expose the pretentions of religion as man-denying, in order to open the way for people to become lovers of nature and Humanity. Stated less dramatically, the issue is this: Ought man *ultimately* to be a servant of God or of man? Feuerbach and

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1. *Ibid*., p. 161.

2. Quoted by Hook, *op. cit*., pp. 222-223, from *Sämmtliche Werke*, 1846, Preface to Vol. I, pp. xiv-xv.

3. Marx adds, however, that his affirmation of man does not rest primarily on this feuerbachian dialectic. "Socialism as Socialism no longer needs such a mediation; it begins with the *theoretically and practically sensible consciousness* of man and nature as the *essence*. *Historisch-Kritisch Gesamtausgabe*, I, iii, p. 125.

Marx, on the one side, and Kierkegaard on the other, saw this as the issue, and grasped it as an either-or question. He who says "both", has, according to all these men, not fully understood the issue. What Feuerbach and Marx have seen is that if a man is ultimately to be a servant of man, he cannot at all be a servant of God; and only from confusion or hypocrisy can claim to be. If one chooses the other horn, the issue is, I think, a little different. To be ultimately a servant of God means that one can only "also" be a servant of man. And it must be understood that this "also" does not mean "in addition" in this case. That one is a servant of God will completely determine how he goes about being a servant of man. All this Feuerbach has seen quite clearly. The only point at which I demur is that, in the latter case, I deny that the issue is whether one is to be a servant of man for man's sake or for God's sake. There is nothing to prevent the servant of God from being "also" a servant of man - for man's sake. There is everything, however, to prevent him from being a servant of man - on man's terms! At any rate, for Feuerbach the issue, "_Ought_ one ultimately to be a servant of God or of man?" was settled when he had shown what man really _was_. As with Hegel, the second and third moments followed by an inner necessity, given the first moment. Given the premise that Man is divine, man's service of an other-than-human Being becomes by definition estrangement, and the way to the reconciliation becomes equally obvious.

Before we leave the subject of Feuerbach's critique of religion, however, we must note one other significant thing: As with Strauss, there is always in the background the claim that "the modern world", "the nineteenth century", had simply progressed to the point that the doctrines of religion were absurd. The claim is, to be sure, stated in a more sophisticated way than with Strauss. Oh, one does find occasionally the same throwing up of hands, the same declamations that it is absurd even to discuss these things in the age of the steamboat and the locomotive. But there is also the considerably more serious note that even the religious have implicitly given up these fancies, though they have lacked the courage or the wit to see the real outcome of the assumptions according to which they live. There are conciliations everywhere, vain and hypocritical attempts to reconcile the outmoded religious outlook with modern science and culture, accommodations, sophistical "syntheses". Feuerbach waxes quite Kierkegaardian in his contempt for this "hypocrisy", and again like Kierkegaard sees hegelianism as a prime example of it. Feuerbach has high respect for the Christians of by-gone ages, who turned recklessly away from the world in order to be single-minded servants of God. They lived in an illusion, but by the way in which they lived their lives they had earned the right to stand in opposition to any humanization of God. The modern age, with what Kierkegaard called its "double-mindedness" has lost this right. The modern Christian mouths the ancient dedication to the other-worldly God, but in his mouth it has become a mere slogan, mere cant; he does not permit it to stand in the way of his calculating shrewdness in worldly things, his sexual adventures, his pursuit of beefsteak and soft cushions. He puts his trust in God - and buys life insurance! The situation is nauseating.

> . . . I turn away with loathing and contempt from modern Christianity, in which the bride of Christ readily acquiesces in polygamy . . . but yet at the same time - oh! shameful hypocrisy! - swears by the eternal, universally binding, irrefragable sacred truth of God's Word. I turn back with reverence to the misconceived truth of the chaste monastic cell, where the soul betrothed to heaven did not allow itself to be wooed into faithlessness by a strange earthly body![1]

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[1] The Essence of Christianity, p. 164. See also pp. 209-210.

Not only in his way of life, but in his theoretical outlook also, modern man has really forsaken traditional religion. The existence of comprehensive bodies of science based on purely immanent principles of causation is actually a massive denial of the existence, or at least the potency, of God, even though the scientists themselves might wish to remain ever so pious. The attempt to accommodate to this outlook with the doctrine of secondary or intermediate causation is a miserable sophistry which gives away the whole case of religion; for it admits the operation of a foreign element, a modern element, totally outside the essential religious viewpoint. "Second causes are a capitulation of the unbelieving intellect with the still believing heart."[1] This contradiction, this impasse, has got to end. What is needed is a prophet who can show the way to a future in which man lives in harmony with himself. Into this role Feuerbach himself means to step.

iii. _Marx_: _Man's_ _Self_-_Alienation_ _in_ _Society_

However, there appeared on the scene at about the same time another candidate for this role of prophet of the future, a candidate who was to be more successfully at it than Feuerbach, programmatically at least. We shall wish, within the limits of our interests here, to take a look at the reconciling programs of Karl Marx, as well as Feuerbach; I shall try especially to show the basic point at which Marx considered that he had made an "advance" on Feuerbach. Yet Marx, during the years when his own mature thought was taking shape and through 1844 was an enthusiastic feuerbachian. In fact, even long after he had terminated his allegiance to Feuerbach as a constructive thinker and prophet, feuerbachian elements remained, especially in the form of his analysis of alienation.

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[1] _Ibid_., pp. 189-190. See also xliv, and _Kleine_ _philosophische_ _Schriften_ passim; and Löwith's discussion, _Von_ _Hegel_ _zu_ _Nietzsche_, pp. 361-363. Feuerbach cites Strauss on this last point, _Die_ _Christliche_ _Glaubenslehre_, II, §§ 75-76.

It was evident to others besides Marx that the critique of religion in the 1830's and early 40's pointed the way to a critique of other aspects of Western culture. Religion having been unmasked as a human product, it was easier to recognize certain other established orders as being also human products - man's creations set above and against man himself. Many of the young Hegelians grasped this point,[1] but it was Marx who developed it most penetratingly into a general critique of the existing social order. Strauss, Bauer, and especially Feuerbach, had been necessary elements in his enlightenment. But their distinctive contribution was essentially at an end. Marx accordingly begins his "Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right" - which was really a critique of the German state and society as well, of which he saw Hegel's philosophy as the authentic explication - with the statement:

> For Germany the *critique of religion* is essentially finished, and the critique of religion is the presupposition of every critique.[2]

As Marx develops this opening salvo, it is clear that Feuerbach's account of the matter is accepted as authoritative so far as the critique of religion is concerned. He does remark, however, that the "Man" who is the creator of religion "is no abstract essence [*Wesen*] lurking outside the world" but the particular historical society of men. "Man, that is, *the world of men*, state, society". This statement of the matter not only contains implicitly the later critique of Feuerbach, but points to Marx's own prescription for dealing with the problem. This social, political world of men has produced an "inverted consciousness of the world", i.e. religion, because it is itself an "inverted world". That means a self-estranged world, a self-estranged humanity. This analysis takes us beyond Feuerbach's already, because as we have seen Feuerbach offered no reason why mankind should have originated and perpetuated the monstrous inversion which he describes. Now, this is the question Marx is raising, and he insists that the answer must be found in the fact that the social order is already estranged. The estrangement of man in his self-projection into "another world" is the reflection of his estranged situation in this world. "Religion is the general theory of this world, its encyclopaedic compendium, its logic in popular form". The forms which man's self-emptying, his degradation over against God, have taken in religious history are the indices of the various forms of his self-degradation as a social and political creature.

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[1] Hook provides a good general discussion of this development, *op*. *cit*., pp. 248-251.

[2] Karl Marx, *Die Frühschriften*, p. 207. First published in Marx's *Deutsch-Französischen Jahrbüchern*, 1844.

Therefore the criticism of religion as such, necessary as it has been, has reached a dead end. The criticism of religion has brought to self-consciousness the estrangement of the human situation, but it cannot in itself account for this phenomena or cope with it. The real struggle now lies in other quarters.

> The battle against religion is therefore mediately the battle against that world, whose spiritual aroma religion is.
> Religious misery is the expression of the real misery and at the same time the protest against the real misery. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the soul of a heartless world, as it is the spirit Geist of spiritless circumstances. It is the opium of the people.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 208. Hook points out that this last famous sentence has been distorted in popular usage, as are most serious remarks when they have become slogans. If religion were merely a "drugged slumber", then the task would be simply to wake the people up, as Feuerbach and the others had undertaken to do. But Marx's point is that it is futile to be anti-religious as such. "The working-class movement, according to Marx, must in the first instance be directed against the milieu whose social antagonisms are eased through the cultural opium . . . " From Hegel to Marx, p. 293.

In this rather gentle analysis of the religious illusion, Marx sees that the task is not simply to snatch the opium away from the tormented addict, but to cure the torment which has forced the addict to turn to his drug. Marx has thus grasped the problem of man's self-alienation in a way that is significantly new. This re-setting of the problem involved him in a critique of Feuerbach himself, as well as the "critical critics" of religion (as Bauer and "his consorts" are called in *Die heilige Familie*). They have not grasped the new task posited by this analysis of the problem. Philosophy must turn from the exposure of "the holy form of human self-alienation" to the exposure of its "unholy form". It must expose the untruth, the inauthenticity, of the human condition. It must do this "in the service of history", for the task of history is to destroy this untruth.

> The critique of heaven transforms itself into the critique of earth, the *critique of religion* into the *critique of justice* [*Recht*], the *critique of theology* into the *critique of politics*.[1]

It is not enough for Prometheus to steal the fire from heaven. He must warm the earth with it. In fact, the marxian Prometheus cannot steal the fire from heaven until the earth is already warmed.

On the one hand, therefore, Feuerbach's analysis of man's self-alienation in his religion becomes for Marx the key for understanding other social and cultural forms to which man has forfeited his humanity. Not that religion is really the basis of man's self-alienation; it is only the expression of it. But by calling attention to the religious expression of self-alienation, Feuerbach had helped Marx to see the category of self-alienation at work in man's socio-economic life, which Marx held to be the real basis of man's situation. Time and again, direct analogies are made from the feuerbachian analysis of religion to the socio-economic and political life of the bourgeois era.[1] These analogies are possible, because the state and its institutions, private property, the mercantile system, modern industrial organization, money - all of these social forms had enjoyed apotheosis. Like the gods, they are creations of men, but also like the gods they have been set against men, above men; men have come to exist for their sakes and so have been dehumanized. In fact, these social forms serve the special interests of certain individuals, who are constituted a class by their common stake in these forms. As class interests, however, these forms

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 209.

> win an independent existence over against the individual persons, in this independence take on the shape of general interests, enter as such into opposition with the real individuals.[2]

Now these interests are represented to be common interests of all mankind, to which all must bend the knee; they thus come to be "conceived by the consciousness as ideal, even as religious, sacred".[3]

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[1] For example, just as in religion everything which man attributes to God constitutes a diminution of himself, so in labor the more a man objectifies himself in his work the less he himself is personally. Gesamtausgabe, I, iii, pp. 83, 86. Again, just as man is estranged from man in the distinction between priesthood and laity, so it is in the distinction between employer and employed. Ibid., I, iii, p. 91. Again, the state absorbs the merely special, egoistic elements of bourgeois society, achieves a kind of universality in which all may theoretically participate, as Hegel had tried to show; but this absorption is like the theoretical Aufhebung of earth by heaven, since it in fact leaves everything as it is, in the bellum omnium contra omnes of bourgeois society. For the political emancipation which had given the bourgeoisie its "rights" against the aristocracy had only established a state which was the tool of bourgeois interests. Merely political emancipation, like the religious, is not true human emancipation, but leaves men in chains. Früschriften, pp. 181-183, 324.

[2] Marx and Engels, "Die deutsche Ideologie", Gesamtausgabe, I, v, p. 226. This quotation is from the section entitled "Sankt Max", which is omitted from the English translation: The German Ideology, Parts I and III, edited with an introduction by R. Pascal (New York: International Publishers, 1947). This particular quotation is cited in a note, p. 203, in the translation.

[3] Ibid.

Bourgeois interests thus have become enshrined in the laws and morality, as well as the so-called public institutions of modern civilization. They become the "common interests" into whose service all men are bound by all that is moral and sacred to forfeit themselves. The great masses of people become laborers, divided into specialized tasks, so that each man is of worth only in virtue of his minute contribution to the mystified "common interests". Men become commodities, digits in the economy, meat and muscle bought and sold on the industrial market for the work that can be extracted from them. The more they produce, the stronger becomes the system which oppresses them, since the fruits of their labor are appropriated by those around whose interests the whole system is oriented. Thus "man's own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him".[1] As for the moral, political, religious order in which the bourgeois interests are enshrined, the great masses of people figure in it only as its slaves. In The Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels declare that the proletarian is stripped of all status in this order.

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[1] The German Ideology (Pascal Edition), p. 22. The theme of "estranged labor" is carefully worked out in the early writings of Marx and Engels, at least in its theoretical contours. See ibid., pp. 44, 48-49, 56-57, 64-66 for examples of the contention that estranged labor in its conflict with private property is the basis of nearly all the ills of modern civilization, and every human tragedy. E.g., in his early essay on suicide Marx interprets this phenomenon as a manifestation peculiar to this estranged society, no part of the natural life of man as such. Gesamtausgabe, I,iii, pp. 393, 406. See especially Marx' chapter on "Entfremdete Arbeit" from the Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, Gesamtausgabe, I, iii, pp. 81-94. Of course, the conflict between estranged labor and bourgeois ownership has not only produced the ills of society, but also, by positing the proletariat class, contains the seed to their solution.

For detailed secondary treatments of this theme, see Marcuse, op. cit., pp. 273-287, and Karl Löwith's essay, "Man's Self-Alienation in the Early Writings of Marx", Social Research, XXII (1954), pp. 205ff. I must mention another essay, as yet unpublished, which has been very influential in my reading of Marx at this point: Loyd Easton, "Alienation and History in the early Marx", to be published in Philosophy and Phenomenological Research.

The theme of alienated labor in bourgeois society, developed philosophically in the early writings, received its massive documentation in Capital. Marx shows how the lives of people become hopeless, mindless, brutish, squalid, and short, in their service of the "general interest". Nor are considerations of "morality" allowed to intrude. E.g., women and children work cheap. Therefore there is a demand for them; the capitalist "buys" them, the husband and father becomes "a slave dealer", "sells wife and child"

> Law, morality, religion, are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests.[1]

Even though the form of Marx' exposition shifted in his later work from anthropological theory to economic analysis, the feuerbachian model for the doctrine of alienation is still discernible. "The religious world is but the reflex of the real world", he declares in Capital. Now he sees "Christianity with its cultus of abstract man, more especially in its bourgeois developments, Protestantism, Deism, etc." as "the most fitting form of religion" for the bourgeois industrial society in which human beings had been reduced to "the standard of homogeneous human labor". Again we are told that this "religious reflex" will vanish only when a new state of affairs exists in "the real world".[2] The student of the early writings is not surprised when these remarks on religion are followed by the discussion of the "Fetish character" of capitalistic society, in particular of its monetary system.[3] The Fetishes to which man has subjugated himself in his economic and social life have arisen, as have his gods, from the self-estrangement of his labor and his life. This alienation,

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(continued from p. 336) as well as himself. Capital (New York: The Modern Library, 1906), p. 432. The laborer, man, woman or child, is sacrificed as a human being for his negotiable functions, "just as in the States of La Plata they butcher a whole beast for the sake of his hide or his tallow". Ibid., pp. 396, 321.

[1] The Communist Manifesto, Authorized English translation (New York: International Publishers, 1948), p. 20; see also pp. 26-29.

[2] Capital, p. 91.

[3] Ibid., pp. 94ff.

this dehumanization, has choked the whole of Western society, capitalist as well as laborer. The capitalist has also been subjected to the tearing asunder of his life from his humanity, of man from man, and to the fetishism of his culture, though it is in the workers whom he oppresses that the estrangement assumes the transparency of obvious human misery.

It is important for us to notice how Feuerbach and Marx have reversed Hegel's doctrine of alienation, even while they are also much dependent upon him for its form. Hegel begins with Geist; Geist is the Notion, so that the merely immediate, physical existence of man is estranged, of course, from his Notion. In morality, the state, culture, religion, philosophy, this immediacy is overcome; these become progressive forms of reconciliation. But for Feuerbach, and especially Marx, these are precisely the forms of man's self-estrangement, and that for the same reason that in Hegel they are forms of reconciliation: because they overcome the immediate truth of man as such. Feuerbach and Marx wish to begin with man, and therefore see man as alienated in those forms which Hegel sees as forms of Geist. Of course Hegel finds forms of estrangement in each of these successive stages, but the reconciliation of each of these forms of estrangement is being produced by the movement of Geist which is immanent within it. Marx criticizes this view, not only for its idealism, its conservatism, its tendency to justify the existing order with all its inequities, as we have seen; but the very view of what constitutes alienation and what one is alienated from is exactly upside down. Hegel's view of alienation is itself alienated.

A second thing to be noticed is the fact that Marx's analysis of the situation demanded a total revolution of the existing order. Once morality, the political state, religion, the image of man etc.

are themselves seen to be functions of the estranged social order, it is clear that a reform based on these structures or even a reform in the structures themselves cannot eradicate the basic sickness. For example, the liberal political principles pursued in the revolutions of the late eighteenth century and emblazoned on the shields of liberal movements everywhere were no cure for the problem. In a notable analysis of the constitutional documents on civil rights which developed out of the French and American revolutions, Marx finds that the "rights of man" variously declared are only capitalistic rights of egoistic man in the bourgeois society. This egoistic man is to be free - to maim, exploit, and possess as he will, defended in this "right" by the liberal state. This is by no means the freedom of the real "man", the "species" is by no means freed.[1] The political struggle as such, then, is again only a reflection of the real struggle - the class struggle. But just for that reason, Marx says, writing to Ruge in 1843 about the purpose of their new journal (*Deutsch-Französischen Jahrbüchern*), they must concern themselves with political questions. "Just as *religion* is the index of the theoretical battles of man, so the *political state* is the index of his practical battles." The political question must be used to bring to men's consciousness just what the real battle is.

> Our entire purpose can consist in nothing else - as is also the case with Feuerbach's critique of religion - than to bring the religious and political questions into self-consciously human form.[2]

However, as Marx made it quite clear in the first issue of the new journal, in his important essay on "The Jewish Question", the political question is not to be confused with the real "human" question. The political question really stands on the same level with the religious - as a mere "index" to the alienated state of man. Bruno Bauer had said that the Jews must emancipate themselves from Judaism if they were to be politically and socially emancipated; they must give up their special claims, based on religious positivity, and join in the struggle of mankind for emancipation. But Marx retorts that this supposedly anti-theological prescription is still on the same fundamental ground as theology itself. While Bauer sees that the religious connection of the state must be overthrown, he does not see that the state itself must be overthrown, that the political state rests on the same ground as positive religion; Bauer's answer is still fundamentally theological, because it does not overcome the alienation which has driven man into religion, but simply diverts this alienated man into another "theological" form, the state.[1] The real problem is that the Jews, and the Christians too for that matter, have come to worship and serve the essentially inhuman: "Haggling" is their "worldly cultus", and money their "worldly God" - that is the real problem, and not the theological version. Man measures his worth in money! "Money is the essence of man's work and existence, estranged from him, and this strange essence rules over him, and he prays to it." And just as Feuerbach sought to free man from his estranged existence by recalling him from love of God to love for man, so Marx declares that "The emancipation from haggling and from "money - therefore from practical, real Judaism - would be the self-emancipation of our time." In this sense - "Judaism" understood as the haggling worship of money - "The emancipation of the Jews in its final meaning is the emancipation of humanity from Judaism."[1]

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[1] "Zur Judenfrage", *Frühschriften*, pp. 187-199. See also *The German Ideology*, pp. 58-61.

[2] *Frühschriften*, p. 170.

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[1] "Zur Judenfrage," Frühschriften, pp. 176-177. Marx uses the example of the United States, with its dissociation of the state from religion, to show that such a mere official secularization leaves the basic condition of man unchanged - as witness the virulent religiosity of the American people. The real standpoint of the American state is still the same as that of religion: self-alienated man. Criticism must penetrate beyond religion to the basis of the state as well. Ibid., pp. 177-185.

This attack is not directed fundamentally against the Jews,[2] but against bourgeois society in all its works. Feuerbach's critique of positive religion has been extended, even to the point of including Feuerbach's own standpoint in the criticism. For Feuerbach has fallen fundamentally into the same error as Bauer. Starting from the fact of religious self-alienation, Feuerbach has resolved

> the religious world into its secular basis. But that the secular basis raises itself above itself and establishes for itself an independent realm in the clouds can be explained only through the cleavage and self-contradictions within this secular basis. The latter must therefore in itself be understood in its contradiction and revolutionized in practice. Therefore after, e.g., the earthly family is discovered to be the secret of the heavenly family, one must proceed to destroy the former both in theory and in practice.[3]

Feuerbach, with Bauer and Stirner, is really a sheep in wolf's clothing: he supposes that by a mere exposure of errors which reflect an estranged social order the estrangement will itself dissolve.[4] Once it is seen, however, that the religious alienation is an effect, and not a cause, and once one has found the cause in an alienated economic-social order, the conclusion which will follow is no longer theoretical but practical, no longer merely critical but revolutionary. The marxist program

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[1] Ibid., pp. 201-204.

[2] Contrary to Dagobert Runes, who has recently edited Marx' essay as though it were an anti-Semitic tirade under the title A World Without Jews (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959). Marx clearly intends to say that this worldly "God" and cultus of "Judaism" is the worldly God and cultus of bourgeois society in general - and preeminently in the Protestant Christian society. Frühschriften, pp. 205-206. Sidney Hook defends Marx against the charge of anti-Semitism, while admitting that he was "not over-sensitive" in his language. Op. cit., pp. 278-279n.

[3] "Thesen über Feuerbach," no. iv, Frühschriften, p. 340. Translated as an appendix to the Pascal edition of The German Ideology, p. 198.

[4] The German Ideology, pp. 1-6, 33-34, 37 et passim.

> does not explain practice from the idea, but explains the formation of ideas from material practice; and accordingly it comes to the conclusion that all forms and products of consciousness cannot be dissolved by mental criticism, by resolution into 'self-consciousness' or transformation into 'apparitions,' 'spectres,' 'fancies,' etc., but only by the practical overthrow of the actual social relations which gave rise to this idealistic humbug; that not criticism but revolution is the driving force of history, also of religion, of philosophy and all other types of theory.[1]

In Marx' view, not only religion is revealed to be "positive", but the state, morality, property, and all other creations of an alienated society; none of these forms belongs to man himself, for positivity has been revealed to be the product of self-alienation. The marxist solution to the problem of positivity is therefore the practical overthrow of the existing society itself - but an overthrow grounded in the dialectic of history itself.

iv. The Quest for a Naturalistic Reconciliation (1)

Feuerbach and Marx agree, in principle, that if there is to be any reconciliation for man's estranged condition it must be brought about by man himself, in man himself, and not in "thought" in the idealistic sense which is itself an alienation. But they have not forgotten that man is a thinker. The important thing, however, as Feuerbach says, is that "Being is the subject, thought the predicate".[2] There is no thought save in a natural being who thinks. The real unity of thought and being is therefore to be found in man, who is a natural being, but is the being in which nature rises to consciousness, to thought - without thought thereby ceasing to be a natural activity. Reason is nothing else than a predicate of man; man, the natural creature of flesh and blood is its subject. "Man thinks, not the Ego, not the Reason." Contrary to the claim of the "old philosophy" that the rational is the real, the "new philosophy" - "the philosophy of the future" - says:

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[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

[2] "Vorläufige Thesen zur Reform der Philosophie", *Kleine philosophische Schriften*, p. 73.

> only the human is the true and the real; for only the human is rational; Man is the measure of Reason.[1]

From this dictum there follows an important "categorical imperative" of what we would call existential thinking.

> Do not wish to be a philosopher in distinction from men, be nothing more than a thinking man; do not think as a thinker, i.e. within a faculty torn out of the totality of the real essence of man [Menschenwesens] and isolated to itself; think as a living, real creature [Wesen] . . . think in existence, in the world as member of it, not in the vacuum of abstraction, as an individuated Monad, as an absolute Monarch, as a non-participating, other-worldly God - then you can consider that your thoughts are the unity of being and thought.[2]

Thus Feuerbach declares in the preface to The Essence of Christianity that he is "a natural philosopher in the domain of mind",[3] by which he means that he is going to treat what are considered spiritual topics but is going to do so by means of real material media. The senses are as indispensable as the brain as organs of truth. He is going to proceed empirically; the object must first be grasped by the senses before it can be defined in the mind. He begins, not with chimeras, dogmas, aerie notions, but with actual sensuous objects; in particular with man. This construction is indeed to be philosophy. But

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[1] Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft, § 50, Kleine philosophische Schriften, p. 163.

[2] Ibid., § 51, p. 164; see § 61, p. 169.

[3] Essence of Christianity, p. xxxiv.

> . . . both in substance and in speech, it places philosophy in the negation of philosophy, i.e. it declares that alone to be the true philosophy which is converted in succum et sanguinem, which is incarnate in Man; and hence it finds its highest triumph in the fact that to all dull and pedantic minds, which place the essence of philosophy in the show of philosophy, it appears to be no philosophy at all.
>
> This philosophy has for its principle, not the Substance of Spinoza, not the ego of Kant and Fichte, not the Absolute Identity of Schelling, not the Absolute Mind of Hegel, in short, no abstract, merely conceptional being, but a real being, the true Ens realissimum - man; its principle, therefore is in the highest degree positive and real.[1]

Feuerbach's basis for the reconciliation of man's self-estrangement is already contained in this starting-point. Reconciliation is not brought about, as in Hegel's thought, by the Absolute's recovery of itself in man, but by man's recovery of himself in the Absolute. Man must be brought to know that the divine attributes belong to him; not only do the personal qualities usually attributed to God belong to men, but, as we have just seen, man is the Ens realissimum! The man who is fully conscious of his Humanity knows himself not only as the "personal" God, but

> . . . as the self-conscious essence of nature, as the essence of history, as the essence of the state, as the essence of religion - man, who is and knows himself to be the real (not imaginary) absolute identity of all oppositions and contradictions, all active and passive, mental and sensuous, political and social qualities - knows that the pantheistic essence which the speculative philosophers or rather the theologians have distinguished from men as an abstract essence objectified, is none other than his own essence, undetermined but capable of infinite determinations.[2]

For Hegel, man's reconciliation consisted in his conscious knowledge of himself as Geist. For Feuerbach, it is man's conscious knowledge of his own Humanity - but this Humanity possesses all the attributes of Hegel's Geist, Humanity is an ersatz God! Feuerbach considers himself spared from idealism by the fact that Humanity has its basis in nature - in this sense Humanity is nature's "self-conscious essence" - and belongs to each man. But this consideration does not really simplify the problem much, since the individual man is hardly in immediate identity with Humanity in this exalted sense. Two questions arise: Is there any sense in which Humanity can be said to possess these divine or absolute predicates which Feuerbach attributes to it? If so, how can it be appropriated by the ordinary, two-legged variety of folk one is apt to meet on the street?

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[1] Ibid., xxxv.

[2] "Vorläufige Thesen zur Reform der Philosophie", Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 74-75. See pp. 76-77.

Humanity, for Feuerbach, cannot be simply an ideal, or an Idea implicit in the actual race of men in Hegel's sense. Humanity is identical with the natural human species. But can Humanity in this sense be said to be absolute perfection, without limitation? Yes, Feuerbach claims, it can be. Consider, for example, the accumulated knowledge of Humanity in its science. Does theology speak of God as omniscient, do the Gospels speak of God's numbering the hairs on each man's head, does Thomas Aquinas speak of God's knowing every individual thing? This "divine knowledge", which is mere phantasy in theology, "becomes rational, actual knowledge in the telescopic and microscopic knowledge of natural science". Science has counted the stars in the heaven, the eggs of the fish and butterfly, the hairs and muscles of the body. "What more can one ask for?"[1] Well, there is the matter of sin. Of course. "All men are sinners. Granted; but they are not all sinners in the same way." Some are liars, some drunkards, some licentious etc., while some are not. No one is perfect, perhaps, but the particular "sins" committed by one man are not committed by another; thus people cancel out one another's "sins".

Thus, in the moral as well as the physical and intellectual

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[1] Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft, § 12, Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 101-103.

> elements, men compensate for each other, so that, taken as a whole, they are as they should be, they present the perfect man.[1]

But surely, even at best, the accomplishments of the whole historical race taken together are limited? Yes, as they stand at present, but what of the future?

> The history of mankind consists of nothing else than a continuous and progressive conquest of limits, which at a given time pass for the limits of Humanity, and therefore for absolute insurmountable limits. But the future always unveils the fact that the alleged limits of the species were only limits of individuals.[2]

What Hegel called the Idea, says Feuerbach, is really "faith in the historical future, in the triumph of truth and virtue".[3]

But what can be the basis for such a "faith" - which seems to transform the historical future into a timeless infinite! The basis appears to be the analysis of religion with which we began. In the first section of The Essence of Christianity Feuerbach distinguishes between the individual and the species, between the outer and the inner life of man. The outer life is the distinct individual existence of each man. But the religious consciousness is the link to man's knowledge of his inner life, his essence, which, however, is an estranged consciousness since he projects his essential, inner, universal nature outside himself, onto God. Yet this consciousness of the infinite, the universal, the essential has already taken man beyond the limits imposed by his mere outer nature. Indeed, consciousness properly so-called is never limited by particular existence.

> Consciousness is essentially infinite in its nature. The consciousness of the infinite is nothing else than the consciousness of the infinity of consciousness.[4]

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[1] The Essence of Christianity, pp. 155-156.

[2] Ibid., pp. 152-153.

[3] Ibid., p. xxxiv.

[4] Ibid., pp. 1-3, 5, 14, 281, et passim.

But in striking this hegelian chord, has Feuerbach's naturalistic humanism not been in fact transposed back into idealism? At any rate, man's "inner nature" can in this sense be defined as consciousness of the infinite, a consciousness which turns out to be identical with its infinite object. Feuerbach identifies this inner nature with the species itself. Thus the species appears to be infinite in nature, but then the problem arises as to the way in which individual men as such - outer natures - are related to this generic inner nature. For the infinite consciousness clearly belongs to the latter, not to the former.

In fact, Feuerbach says plainly that his generic, inner man is not to be identified with men in their concrete vocational activity. He is not an "artist, thinker, author, or judge", because these special vocations are not "characteristic, essential qualities of men". They are only accidents, they belong only to his outer nature. Man as such, in his essential, inner nature, is simply "a person", with his "needs, sensations, dispositions" - i.e. a person in general.[1] When Stirner, from the standpoint of "the Individual, charges that Feuerbach's Man, Humanity, Species, is an abstraction, Feuerbach of course denies it, but admits - in a footnote! - that the species is indeed an abstraction so far as each individual is concerned. The species has "in itself" sensuous existence, though "for me" it is "only an abstraction, only a thought". He means that the species in the sense of the comprehensive totality of all men who ever have lived or ever will live does indeed have a sensuous existence (or has had or will have), though for an individual this totality can only be grasped in thought. But this totality of empirical men has been -

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[1] "Vorläufige Thesen zur Reform der Philosophie", Kleine philosophische Schriften, p. 76.

and presumably will be - composed of hunters, sailors, thinkers, artists, etc. How can Feuerbach identify the empirical species in this sense with his pure, essential, inner man, his Humanity? Can this latter ever be anything more than a thought? Can it even be a serious thought for one who "thinks in existence"? However, in the same footnote Feuerbach mentions one of his richest and most influential themes, in the light of which he believes the dilemma can be resolved.

> I understand by species also the nature of man; a meaning however which stands in an inner connection with the other, for the nature of man exists only in the opposition of I and thou, man and wife.[1]

This is the theme which he develops, against Stirner, in the text itself, and indeed throughout his writings. The theme of "I and thou" is an explication of his view of love, which, as we have seen, is what makes the world go 'round.

We cannot discuss the social existentialism implied in "I and thou" in detail here. We are concerned with the theme only as the most serious way in which Feuerbach seeks to connect the life of men with the divine riches of Humanity. An important clue to understanding this theme is provided in the connection of "I and thou" with "man and wife" in the passage quoted above. Just as husband and wife are correlative terms, so with I and thou. One does not become a genuine "I" except in a shared life, in mutuality with a "thou". I know myself as a self only in my recognition of the selfhood of another, only as I recognize in him a reflection of my own selfhood. Only as I become the "thou" of another do I become an "I". "No thou, no I" became a kind of slogan for Feuerbach. Moreover, all objectivity, all sense of a world, all knowledge of any object, is grounded for Feuerbach in this relation with a personal other; for only one to whom my passion can be directed can rouse me from my vegetative self-contentment and give me the basic consciousness of otherness in general, which is the ground of all objectivity.[1] And not only is the relationship of I and thou the source of all rationality, and therefore of all knowledge, but it continues to be the criterion of truth. This is so for Feuerbach, not only because the concurrence of others serves as a check on private impressions; not only because the society of men with one another is grounded in nature, of a piece with the objective world; but also because the reality of the species is embodied in this relationality between man and man.

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[1] "Über das 'Wesen des Christentums' in Beziehung auf den 'Einzigen und sein Eigentum'", Kleine philosophische Schriften, p. 188n.

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[1] Feuerbach's line is not entirely clear at this point, but it seems that this passionate relationality posits otherness in principle. Against Hegel, Feuerbach says that: "Love is passion, and only passion is the sign of existence. Only that which - be it now real or possible - is an object of passion really is. Perceptionless and passionless abstract thought transcends the distinction between being and non-being, but for love this distinction which disappears in thought is a reality." "Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft", § 33, Kleine philosophische Schriften, p. 146. See also § 35, p. 147: "If the old philosophy says: what is not loved, cannot be loved, is not." At the same time, the I and thou is sometimes said merely to be the basis, between men, for a kind of public verifiability, and not really the relation between the subject and any object: "Only that exists which is for me and for another, in which I and the other agree, which is not only mine, but the common possession." Ibid., § 25, p. 130. But simple sensuous apprehension is also characteristically said to be the final criterion of certainty (ibid., § 33, p. 149). However, love and sensation are closely related, and sometimes spoken of as though they were virtually the same. Therefore, while Feuerbach intends to oppose Hegel's doctrine of the determination of corporeal objects by Reason, Marcuse interprets him onesidedly when he concludes that the ego is only the passive receptor of sensuous determinations for Feuerbach. Op. cit., p. 271. See Hook, op. cit., pp. 231, 262-264, for an ample correction. Hook does admit, though, that Feuerbach "never developed a coherent and unambiguous theory of sense-perception". p. 226. At any rate, for Feuerbach, "The first object of man is man. The sense of nature, which opens to us the consciousness of the world as a world, is a later produce; for it first arises through the distinction of man from himself." The Essence of Christianity, pp. 82-83.

> This other is the representative of the species, even though he is only one, for he supplies to me the want of many others, has for me a universal significance, is the deputy of mankind, in whose name he speaks to me, an isolated individual, so that when united only with one, I have a participated, a human life.[1]

In this participated existence, I gain the universality of the species itself; my judgments of truth, when shared with this personal other, imbibe of this universality. Why this should be so is not clear; certainly the concurrence of another does relieve me to some extent of sheer subjectivity in judgment, but it certainly cannot in one step provide the omniscience, the absolute knowledge, which Feuerbach attributed to the species. Yet, at least in The Essence of Christianity, it is clear that the validity of participated knowledge is based on the assumption that participation between men is an epitome of the species.

> - agreement is the first criterion of truth; but only because the species is the ultimate measure of truth. . . . that which I think according to the standard of the species, I think as man in general only can think. . . . That is true which agrees with the nature of the species, that is false which contradicts it. There is no other rule of truth. But my fellow-man is to me the representative of the species, the substitute of the rest. . . .[2]

This view of the fellow-man as "per se the mediator between me and the sacred idea of the species"[3] connects up, of course, with the doctrine of love on which we commented earlier: Love (subjectively), like Reason (objectively), embodies the immediate reality of the species. Feuerbach carries this doctrine so far that regard for the species is sometimes made to appear as the basis of love. After criticizing the love of the neighbor for God's sake, as an alienated love, Feuerbach seems to recommend the love of the neighbor for the sake of the species! In a footnote to the remark that the love of man is "universal love, adequate to the nature of the species", Feuerbach explains that

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[1] The Essence of Christianity, p. 158.

[2] Loc. cit.

[3] Ibid., p. 159.

> Active love is and must of course always be particular and limited, i.e. directed to one's neighbor. But it is yet in its nature universal, since it loves man for man's sake, in the name of the race.[1]

- or should this be, loves man for Man's sake? That is clearly the intent of the passage, even though again Feuerbach plays on his favorite equivocation of the word "man". It is only too clear that such a doctrine is, on his own terms, another alienation - the alienation of Man from the immediate love of man for man.

Such an alienation was the substance of Stirner's charge against Feuerbach. From the nominalistic standpoint of "the individual", Stirner declares that Feuerbach has only introduced another form of the same old mystification in his doctrine of the species. But Feuerbach replied, we recall, by appealing finally to the immediacy of the I-thou as the meaning of the species.

> The species does not mean an abstraction, but only the particular I, fixed in himself [für sich selbst], over against the thou, the other, the human individual existing outside me.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 264n.

[2] "Über das 'Wesen des Christentums' in Beziehung auf den 'Einzigen und sein Eigentum'", Kleine philosophische Schriften, pp. 187-188. At the same time, we recall that it is only an abstraction for the individual (p. 188n). A few pages later the species is related teleologically to the individual: it stands "above" man in the sense that the butterfly stands above its larval stage. One becomes a "man" only when one is "complete", when one "has satisfied an essential, previously unknown or powerfully repressed drive of his nature". Ibid., p. 190. But in the very next paragraph, where he attempts to explicate for Stirner the distinction he had drawn in man's nature between necessary and external or accidental, essential and unessential, Feuerbach roundly declares that this distinction is basically between the head and the rest of the body! "If I see a man's head, I see the man himself; but if I see only his rump I don't see anything further than his rump." Ibid., pp. 190-191. While one can scarcely

Feuerbach is attempting, in all of his writings during this period, to use the I-thou as the means of preserving the value-oriented outlook of idealism without the idealistic ontology, while at the same time preserving the realistic orientation of materialism without its reductionism. He saw - though none too steadily - that if the idea of the species was to be more than simply an idealistic mystification, it must be incarnate, palpable. Yet the species must bear the full cargo of traditional idealistic values. Art, morality, religion, and philosophy must be revealed as appearances of "the true human essence" of a human life intrinsically rooted in material nature.[1] Only so can Feuerbach's "Philosophy of the Future" be, as he often says, incarnate in man himself, reconciled, in all its traditional idealistic riches, with real men. The distinction between essential and accidental, higher and lower in man, must not be a distinction between the super-empirical and empirical man, but a distinction within the bodily, empirical life of man itself.[2] Man must be a unity of head and heart, thought and material being. Yet his essence cannot be limited by a mere sensible particular, but must be universal, unlimited, free, while at the same time being the essence of the whole man and not simply some special capacity such as thought or will.[3] In the I-thou relationality Feuerbach considered that he had found a concrete reality which would mediate this incarnation

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(continued from p. 351) deny that there is a significant difference in these two vantage points, this way of stating the distinction only serves further to deteriorate an already scrambled issue. This statement portends the crude brand of materialism into which Feuerbach later descended.

[1] "Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft", § 55, Kleine philosophische Schriften, p. 167.

[2] Ibid., §§ 36, 42, pp. 148, 154.

[3] Ibid., §§ 53, 57-58, pp. 165-166, 168.

of philosophy. So now the full weight of Feuerbach's humanistic mysticism is made to rest on the situation of dialogue between man and man. Not only is "true dialectic" a "*dialogue between I and thou*" - "no monologue" - but the divinity which had been attributed to the species must be attributed plainly to this concrete relationality as well: "Man with man - the *unity of I and thou is God*."[1] Feuerbach is perfectly serious about this equation. Philosophy and its Absolute is incarnate in *Mitmenschen*, participated life is nothing less than the absolute God of tradition. Feuerbach stresses this point again and again in *The Essence of Christianity* as the human truth which had been obscurely grasped in the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity: All true life is participated life, and the participation of limited persons becomes an absolute life in itself. One plus one plus one does not equal three, but eternity, when the units are persons.[2]

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[1] *Ibid*., §§ 59-62, pp. 168-169.

[2] *Ibid*., § 63, pp. 169-170; *The Essence of Christianity*, pp. 67, 233, 293-297, et passim.

v. The Quest for a Naturalistic Reconciliation (2)

Even if Feuerbach cannot be considered a philosopher (or no-philosopher) of the first rank, it is not surprising that so many important thinkers have acknowledged a debt to him.[1] He was a seer whose flashes of vision could illuminate many old issues in a new way. Seminal as he is, however, he invariably fails to fulfill what seems to be promised, he mingles whimsey with insight and equivocation with pungent definition. One is reminded of Lowell's famous epigram on "Poe and his raven" -

> like Barnaby Rudge
> Three fifths of him genius and two fifths sheer fudge.[2]

Unfortunately, in Feuerbach's later years the fudge tended more and more to predominate. It is extraordinary how consistently this pattern of youthful brilliance and decline into banality characterized the circle of "young hegelians". Rarely has so much fermentation produced such flat liquors. They paid Hegel the ultimate compliment: By and large, with the exception of Marx, they wrote nothing of permanent value except during the years when they were in direct, critical relation to his thought. Having settled their accounts with Hegel, having ceased being young hegelians, they played out, either quietly or noisily.

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[1] Nietzsche and Buber, to mention only two, in addition of course to Marx. Karl Barth has also acknowledged an influence of a peculiar sort, in many a fine-print paragraph in the *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, as well as in his chapter on Feuerbach in *Die Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert* and in his essay which has been included as the introduction to the English reprint of *The Essence of Christianity*. One overstates the matter only slightly to say that Barth has made invulnerability to Feuerbach's reduction into a criterion of theological adequacy.

[2] James Russell Lowell, "A Fable for Critics". Feuerbach's later embrace of crankish scientism, crude materialism (which he himself had refuted during his earlier years), and what Hook calls "degenerate sensationalism" in epistemology; his ascription of the workers' failure to emancipate themselves to their potato diet, and his prescription of beans for revolutionaries; his increasingly simple-minded understanding of the corporeality of human life, until he was in a position to immortalize himself in every civilized language with the slogan, "man is what he eats" - all this provides the most comic and pathetic chapter in Hook's book. *Op. cit.*, pp. 267ff.

But Feuerbach's effort, even during his most productive period, to make coherent his "incarnation of philosophy" must be accounted a failure. When he equates man with the species of Humanity in a sense abstracted from all limits of time and place and special circumstance, from all "positive" features attaching to man, then there is at least a certain plausibility in attributing to Humanity all the qualities of the absolute "God" of "philosophy". Even this equation is never proven, but only announced; yet how can one deny the absoluteness of a Humanity as idealized as the old Absolute? But this plausibility is won only by creating a new gulf between Humanity and men as limited historical beings. When, to bridge this gulf, Feuerbach speaks of the concrete relationality of I and thou as divine, however, the title "divine" has become largely honorific. Certainly he never shows that the I-thou relationality can have the universality or the freedom from all limitation which he attributes to the species. Whatever one may think of the idea of the Absolute, its limitless perfection cannot cogently be attributed to a relationship between two people - nor indeed can it be attributed to the human species, in the sense of the totality of a large though as yet undetermined number of actual, historical persons. I am aware that there is more involved in the I-thou relationality than a mathematical sum of one plus one. The relation is qualitative, and I do not wish to rob it of any of its actual riches; I wish simply to insist that, as a human relationship, it suffers under finite limitations. Feuerbach attempts to play on the hegelian doctrine of the infinity of Geist's self-consciousness in its other. But Hegel's Geist is trans-human. Feuerbach wishes to deny this idealism, yet attribute infinity to the relationship between an historical I and thou, and to do this he is required to talk about grasping the species in the other - an expression that is intelligible only if he can make the relationship between an individual and a "divine" species categoreally intelligible in the first place.

What Feuerbach has in fact done is to deny that the I-thou is a genuine human relationship. He is to be given credit for calling to the attention of modern thought the qualitative richness, beyond mere objectification, which is potential to this relationship. But in his own treatment the relationship is simply fabulous and sentimental. It was impossible for him to explore the actual conditions of this relationship or to discover the significant meanings that may be found in it, because he has put himself in the position of having to find the attributes of God there! Now this is certainly an estranged understanding of this relationship, on the terms of Feuerbach's own understanding of "estrangement". If one sees a significant difference between God and man, and is content to let God be God and man be man, there is no necessary estrangement in the understanding of man; man may then be estranged from God, but our conception of man is not estranged from the actual man. However, when the true man, the true human relationality, must be regarded as divine to be authentic, then the real man, real human relationality, is not only estranged from the true, but positively debased. The merely natural, distinctively human relationships between man and man lose all positive significance. Now this is ironical. It was to Feuerbach's great credit that, against a tradition of puritanical denials, he wanted to affirm, joyously and freely, the satisfactions found in man's natural functions - eating and drinking, sexual love, common human fellowship etc. In eloquent language he calls for celebration in place of masochistic denials or furtiveness or hypocrisy or bad conscience. But this call for celebration of the bodily life is put forward in a form which denies precisely what he wishes to affirm: the richness of unmystified, natural, human life! Food, sex, etc. are to be valued because they are sacraments, indeed because they are sacred, divine, the life of God! So in place of the full-bodied, warm-blooded humanism which we want to find in Feuerbach - and which one who knows the difference between man and God can wish to affirm with all his heart - we find instead a call to a religion of Man. I have not developed this theme in detail, because when a person has looked into one religion of Humanity he has pretty well seen them all. Knowing Feuerbach's propensities, one is not surprised to hear more of flesh and blood and togetherness in his brand than in most, but one is not deceived; it is really an altogether bloodless affair. Like Strauss' it marks the complete submergence of the "arbitrariness" - the concreteness - of "positive religion". Its principles are thoroughly rational, in accord with the lights which science happens to be flickering at the time, it vibrates with the sonorities of general principles acknowledged by all right-thinking men, it exhorts men to love of the neighbor; it knows neither the purely human satisfaction and dignity of man, nor the tragedy of man, but only his "divinity".

As Barth says of Feuerbach's apotheosis of man, "anyone who is not able to laugh in his face at this point will never get at him with whining or with angry criticism of his views of religion." Such laughter is certainly possible for those who know "that we men are evil from head to foot" and who "have reflected that we must die".[1] But one can laugh without even knowing that much. Friedrich Engels reflects, long afterward, the discovery of the young-hegelian circle that

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[1] Karl Barth, "Introductory Essay" to Feuerbach's The Essence of Christianity, p. xxviii.

> The same Feuerbach who, on every page, preaches sensuousness, absorption in the concrete, in actuality, becomes thoroughly abstract as soon as he begins to talk of any other than mere sex relations between human beings.[1]

Engels goes on to contrast the "astonishing poverty" of Feuerbach's thought as contrasted with Hegel's - the naively few and simple and therefore overloaded categories in which Feuerbach attempts to cram the many facets of human nature and activity. Hegel sees that many rubrics are needed if the actual life of man is to be grasped in thought, as in his carefully articulated philosophy of right. "Here (with Hegel) the content is as realistic as the form is idealistic." Now this is an acute remark, even if too simply expressed, and even though Engels does not seem to see why it should be so. Hegel was able to think historically, to base his categories on the actual men and civilizations. Even if his generalizations were too broad, or actually wrong in some details, still there was nothing in the nature of his system to prevent him from talking about the real activities of real men. He was able to proceed, as he says, empirically, to state as the nature of man in any epoch just what he finds in fact to be in the historical record. He was able to do this, because the Absolute is trans-human, trans-historical; Geist is indeed the truth of man, but it is not a merely human truth of man. It may be negatively related to man in an historical epoch. Thus Hegel is able to grasp man as an historical being, and is able in principle at least to do justice to the actual values and qualities which characterize men in any epoch; while at the same time acknowledging a judgmental principle which is both transcendent over each epoch and immanent in all. But if Hegel was realistic in content despite his idealism in form, according to Engels,

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[1] Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy (New York: International Publishers, 1941), p. 36. See also p. 34: "Feuerbach's idealism consists here in this: he does not simply accept mutual relations based on reciprocal inclination between human beings, such as sex love, friendship, compassion, self-sacrifice, etc., as what they are in themselves - without associating them with any particular religion which to him, too, belongs to the past; but instead he asserts that they will come to their full realization for the first time as soon as they are consecrated by the name of religion." Thus, for example, "intercourse between the sexes is apotheosized to a 'religion', merely in order that the word religion, which is so dear to idealistic memories, may not disappear from the language."

> With Feuerbach it is just the reverse. In form he is realistic since he takes his start from man; but there is absolutely no mention of the world in which this man lives; hence this 'man' remains always the same abstract man who occupied the field in the philosophy of religion. For this man is not born of woman: he issues, as from a chrysalis, from the god of the monotheistic religions. He therefore does not live in a real world historically created and historically conditioned. It is true he has intercourse with other men, but each one of them is, however, just as much an abstraction as he himself is.[1]

Engels states here the basic criticism of Feuerbach which had first been formulated by 1845-1846, when Marx drew up his "Theses on Feuerbach" and the two together wrote The German Ideology. The formulation of this critique constituted a milestone in the development of marxist thought. The first part of The German Ideology is significantly entitled "Feuerbach", even though only a rather small portion of it is actually devoted to a discussion of Feuerbach; while in the same work Marx and Engels still have sufficient respect for Feuerbach's thought to defend him against the criticisms by Bauer and Stirner, they now see that Feuerbach exemplifies the idealistic errors of German ideology in general. Feuerbach's "man" is abstracted from every historical context in which actual men struggle and live, his problem is only found in his relation to his own generic essence, a relation to which social, economic, and political determinations in the various epochs of history are only accidental. Even though Feuerbach does see the intrinsically social character of human life, he only

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[1] Ibid., pp. 36-37. My only quarrel with this analysis is that I think the "form" and "content" rubrics do not do justice to the complexity of the idealism/realism issue, either for Feuerbach or for Hegel.

See also Löwith, Von Hegel zu Nietzsche, p. 334, and Hook, op. cit., p. 223, for remarks on the sentimentality and obscurity of Feuerbach's anthropology.

> wants to establish consciousness of this fact, that is to say, like the other theorists, merely to produce a correct consciousness about an existing fact; whereas for the real communist it is a question of overthrowing the existing state of things. We thoroughly appreciate, moreover, that Feuerbach, in endeavoring to produce consciousness of just _this_ fact, is going as far as a theorist possibly can, without ceasing to be a theorist and philosopher.[1]

In triumphantly reconciling man's essence with his existence, Feuerbach must regard the continuing estrangement in the existence of some as an exceptional though unhappy chance, an abnormality, without recognizing that this "abnormality" is "an historical fact" for millions of proletarians, "based on quite definite social relationships".[2] Therefore he cannot draw the revolutionary conclusions. Insofar as man is considered historically by Feuerbach at all, Feuerbach fails to see the "materialistic", i.e. economic, basis of his situation; and insofar as Feuerbach is a materialist in seeing man as a sensuous object, he fails to see man as a "sensuous activity", a genuinely historical being determined by social relations quite beyond the idealized personal relations of love and friendship.[3] That is why Feuerbach remains a mere theorist in his anthropology - and is thus unable to move beyond theory to revolutionary social action against the real conditions responsible for the alienated life of man.

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[1] _The German Ideology_, p. 33. The context is Marx' objection to Feuerbach's calling himself a "communist" merely because of his recognition that the life of man is a common life.

[2] _Ibid._, p. 34.

[3] _Ibid._, pp. 37-38. For a much more detailed treatment of Marx' critique of Feuerbach during this period, see Sidney Hook's commentary on Marx' "Theses on Feuerbach", _op. cit._, pp. 272-307.

Perhaps the real reason why Feuerbach could not speak humanly about man, despite his admonitions to think in existence and his wish to deal with "real" men, is simply that the dialectic of alienation and reconciliation within which he attempted to see the situation of man is itself irreducibly idealistic. Feuerbach saw that men are not what they ought to be; so far, that claim must belong to any liberal philosophy which wishes to do more than report to men whatever happens to be the immediate facts of their existence. A morally serious philosophy - which Feuerbach's is - refuses to let itself be imprisoned in "the facts", but seeks a standpoint of criticism or judgment over against the facts. Hegel could find such a standpoint in a dialectic frankly grounded in the ontological primacy of the Idea; because of the Idea's immanence in history, the life of man can be seen as approaching adequacy to the Idea even while the Idea is a critical standpoint over against the immediacy of man's historical life as such. But for Feuerbach the naturalistic humanist this critical standpoint cannot be trans-human, but must somehow be found actually ingredient in the natural life of man himself. As an estranged being, therefore, man must be divided within his own natural life, and the basis for his self-reconciliation must also be found within his own natural life. Thus one aspect of human life must be proclaimed to be essential, another aspect the source of man's estrangement. Therefore if Marx sees in Feuerbadh's social mysticism the submergence of man's actual social and historical life, Feuerbach was liable to criticism from the other side on the grounds that individual life as such became for him the form of estrangement. This criticism was formulated by Stirner - who then proceeded to commit the same fallacy in the opposite form, by declaring the individual ego to be the truth of man, so that man is necessarily estranged in his social life. Now, among the young-hegelians, all of whom were equally adamant in their opposition to "theology" and "idealism", the dialectic of alienation and reconciliation had become a kind of game, resolved by each in terms of the abstraction which he declares to be the true or essential life of man. If A is the essential form, then B is denounced as an estrangement. But no, says another, B is the true life of man, and therefore . . . Each saw the others as covert theologians, placing "supernatural" structures in the place of "realities". One man's "reality" was another man's "mystification". Thus Stirner can call Feuerbach a "pious atheist", still really a theologian: Feuerbach has denied the "God" side of the God-man alienation, but still preserves the "man" side, and in fact has built the God idea into his view of man. Stirner wishes to overcome the search for a basic human essence - by coming to rest in the individual as the only reality![1] Feuerbach replies that Stirner has committed precisely the error of Christianity: he has taken the riches of actuality which can belong only to the universal essence, Humanity, and has invested an individual with them. Furthermore, if one does not set the species in the place of God, there will be a "deficiency" in the individual which can only be filled by turning again to the old, discredited supernatural God.[2] In short, who's a theologian? It was clear to each of the young hegelians that the others had received the theological kiss of death.

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[1] See Löwith's discussion of Stirner's doctrine over against Feuerbach at this point, Von Hegel zu Nietzsche, pp. 377-382.

[2] "Über das 'Wesen des Christentums' in Beziehung auf den 'Einzigen und sein Eigentum'", Kleine philosophische Schriften, p. 189.

> Bauer regarded Strauss as a 'priest', Stirner regarded Feuerbach as a 'pious atheist', Marx regarded Bauer as a critic who is critical only as a theologian. But Stirner, who thought he had outdone them all, was characterized - together with the 'holy family' (Bauer) - by Marx as a 'Church father' and 'Saint Max', while Feuerbach sees a 'divine predicate' appearing in Stirner's 'Nothing', and the 'Christian individualization' in his individual Ego.[1]

One who would be only too glad to be a genuine theologian cannot help taking a certain satisfaction in the extent to which all these men who wished to be taken seriously as radicals had such a hard time not being theologians.

Actually, of course, none of them is a theologian. Only in a climate of thought in which the living, acting God had been quite lost from sight could the various pale abstractions put forward by these men be regarded, even in a pejorative sense, as "theological" in significance. The issue between them is, what is the true essence of human life, to which estranged men need to be reconciled? Each shows quite convincingly that the "true essence" put forward by each of the others is only a limited facet of human life, abstracted and idealized. As Hegel had correctly seen, the dialectic of alienation and reconciliation, as a logically necessary movement within existing forms, presupposes the ideality of the first moment. This categoreal condition of the hegelian dialectic cannot be evaded merely by giving a "real"-sounding name to this first moment.

Now, how does this matter stand with Marx? I have not attempted to survey Marx' well-known program of reconciliation in detail here, so I can only submit some summary conclusions: For Marx, we recall, the real resolution to the human problem can be brought about, not in thought, but in pressing quite beyond theory into action. In fact, he criticizes the concept of self-estrangement itself, at least as a theory of men's alienation from an ideal of essential "man". The theorists see that men have lived their lives in a form which is estranged, merely accidental or positive, in relation to the theorists' own subsequent ideal of what man's real essence is. But this ideal is itself historically conditioned, the product of a subsequent structure of social organization. In fact the conditions under which men live has always been determined by the socio-economic structure, a structure which has itself in turn arisen from the inescapable requirement of men to have their material needs fulfilled; just because this requirement is inescapable, men have been obliged to subordinate themselves as persons to the socio-economic structure which fulfills this requirement at the time. This subordination has led to struggle between the classes of men posited by the socio-economic structure, struggles in particular between the ruling classes and the others, between those who benefit more and those who benefit less from the particular socio-economic structure of the time. The real dynamics of this continuing struggle have become apparent especially in the latest form which the struggle has assumed: between bourgeoisie and proletariat. The formation of a proletariat class uniting the vast majority of people in modern society has come about by the very revolution in the means of production which has given the bourgeoisie, or capitalist class, its ascendancy. The bourgeoisie enjoys its privileges only on the basis of socialized, or mass production, the fruits of which, however, the bourgeoisie appropriates to itself. Now there is a contradiction within the concrete historical fact of modern society, that the mass of people which produces the goods necessary for fulfilling men's material needs and desires has in fact no part in the appropriation and exchange of these goods, at least no part beyond their bare subsistence. This contradiction causes all the misery of modern man, and comes to consciousness in the proletarian class which is its most evident victim. The proletarian revolution will not only overthrow their masters but will end the class struggle in general by destroying the very conditions which have posited the division into classes. Society as a whole - the proletariat qua social class vanishes along with its opponent - can then appropriate the fruits of its own collective labors, and each man will be free to live as a man, no longer dominated by the necessity of fulfilling his material needs and no longer dominated by the class structure which this necessity had posited. A history determined by material conditions will issue in a new life of man, no longer so determined, but made free to pursue distinctively human purposes.[1] Material goods can now be the means, and man the end, instead of the converse.

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[1] Löwith, Von Hegel zu Nietzsche, p. 364.

Of course, the call to revolution is not a mere exhortation. Part of Marx' correction of Feuerbach consisted in a return to the historical dialectic of Hegel - "turned right side up", of course.[2] There is a necessary movement in history, not because of an immanent Idea, but because of the fact that the actual socio-economic conditions of a situation contain factors in it which posit its own collapse and the establishment of a new socio-economic form. There are "laws" of history, "tendencies working with iron necessity towards inevitable results".[3] In particular, the revolution and the new order are posited by a necessary dialectic from the contradiction within the capitalist economy itself. Contained within the negation of man in the enslavement to economic conditions is the negation of this negation itself. Only so could free and autonomous founders of the communist society emerge at all - they can emerge as the affirmative which negates the negation, only because they are necessitated in the nature of the original negation itself. Their freedom consists, to be sure, in their self-conscious appropriation of the necessities of history, but for them at least the necessity is no longer blind.[1] Marx is surprisingly vague and in fact almost silent concerning the way of life that is to exist in the new order, beyond the assertion that the life of men is no longer to be a mere function of the way they earn their bread[2] and in general is to be characterized by none of the disagreeable aspects of life found in societies determined by economic class. He simply assures us that in the communist society men will live in a really human way for the first time.

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[1] I have only tried to summarize here the chief points of systematic importance for our purpose, points developed in detail in various writings by Marx and Engels. The German Ideology, pp. 63-78, is an interesting development of the overall view in explicit contrast to Feuerbach and the other "ideologists". See also Gesamtausgabe, I, iii, pp. 114-124.

[2] Capital, pp. 25-26.

[3] Ibid., p. 13.

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[1] Marcuse corrects the common distortion that Marx intended to found a society based on economic materialism; he argues persuasively that Marx' intent was the opposite: the new order is to be the overthrow of the economic materialism which ruled the old. _Op_. _cit_., pp. 273-274, 293-294.

It is likewise true, as Marcuse argues, that the marxist dialectic of history, based as it is on the economic determination of man, applies only to the old order and not to the new. However, there is an important difficulty at another step of Marcuse's interpretation of Marx: "The 'new' state is _the_ _truth_ of the old, but that truth does not steadily and automatically grow out of the earlier state; it can be set free only by an autonomous act on the part of men, that will cancel the whole of the existing negative state." _Op_. _cit_., p. 315; see pp. 317-319. This latter clause is true enough, but the autonomy of men does not fall to them out of the skies. It develops in the only way it can on Marx' terms, out of factors necessarily inherent in the old order itself; i.e. it does "steadily and automatically grow out of the earlier state" as a negation of the old order posited by the old order itself.

[2] " . . . in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic." _The German Ideology_, p. 22.

> In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.[1]

Now, what makes Marx so sure of this? Even granted that a really classless society is a genuine possibility, what makes him so certain that purely by the elimination of economic class distinctions a really "human" life will emerge?

I should suggest that Marx' certainty on this point is a manifestation of the fact that his thinking has been trapped in the hegelian dialectic of alienation and reconciliation. Even though in his later writings he does not usually characterize it as such, he continues to regard the historical life of man (i.e. the "pre-history" which precedes the new order) as an alienated life in the hegelian sense. His primary difference from Hegel in his view of this alienated history consists in his insistence that man's determination by economic class, with the alienated labor etc. that accompanies this, is the sole fundamental condition of his alienation; all of the social misery in history follows from that, according to Marx, because this alienation is the negation of the true life of man. Only on this assumption can it follow that a "free" and truly "human" life will emerge necessarily with the negation of this negation, i.e. with the elimination of economic class distinction. Now Marx does not define this "free" and truly "human" life beyond the negative assurance that it will be attended by none of the woes of the old class-society. He cannot define it beyond this denial, without defining the essential humanity from which historical man is estranged and to which he becomes reconciled in the end of days. This essential humanity is again defined only in negative relation to the historical life of man, as that from which class-oriented man is estranged. In fact it cannot openly be defined even as "essential humanity", because this designation as a systematic moment in his thought would be the admission of one of the mystifications of "German ideology" which he has so loudly denounced. The first moment of the dialectic must go undefined, or it would have become plain that the fundamental presupposition of his dialectic of history is idealistic - as the presupposition of the hegelian dialectic, in whatever disguise, always turns out to be. As it is, the idealism emerges only at the third moment, though even there it is disguised by being only vaguely defined; and by being projected into the future, where the realities of the age of the prophesied reconciliation are not yet available to embarrass its prophets! In fact the age of reconciliation as prophesied probably never will be available for inspection within human history, since it is premised on a view of the nature of man which has nothing to do with historical man.

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[1] The Communist Manifesto, p. 31.

In declaring that his method was identical with its content, Hegel understood the nature of his dialectic better than any of his left-wing successors did. Feuerbach and Marx were alike naive in supposing that they could make use of the dialectic as a method divorced from its idealistic premises. The idealism is built into the dialectic, for only so can the historical life of man, embracing all that he has ever been concretely, be regarded as a necessary estrangement from his "true" life; and only so can such an estranged historical life be regarded as containing the potentiality for a reconciliation of historical man with such a "true" man. Hegel saw this fact clearly, but it took Feuerbach and Marx unawares and against their conscious intent. Strip away the idealism, and all that Marx has done is this: He has called our attention to the fact that a great deal of social misery has stemmed from men's absorption in the economic class system. He has then tried to demonstrate, a good deal less persuasively but still within the realm of viable social theory, that the class system has historically generated within itself the conditions for its own overthrow, that therefore a classless society will be an inevitable result. He has not shown, even granted all this, that the personal, social, moral misery of man will therefore come to an end. Still less has he shown that a pure "human" life of man - whatever that is - would thereby follow. Hegel had offered a rich and multi-faceted analysis of human self-alienation, not only in socio-economic life but in art, religion, morality etc. Nevertheless he was not able convincingly to show that the negation of alienation as so defined must necessarily result in a completely fulfilled human life. We have seen that the necessity for announcing that the Kingdom had come faced Hegel with a severe dilemma, which he never really resolved. (See Chapter IV, §iv above.) Still less could Marx cogently claim that the negation of an alienation defined in such a one-dimensional way could result in anything of the sort. Nor was Hegel's dilemma reduced in the least, in principle, by Marx' projection of the reconciliation into the historical future. (See p. 181 above.)

The intention of speaking humanly, i.e. historically and empirically, about man was commendable in Feuerbach and Marx. It may indeed be possible to speak of a truth about man unmarred by sin and about a redemption of man, and still speak with undeviating realism about the actual historical life of man. But such realism is not possible if such a "true man" is conceived as being immanent in the life of historical man, or if the consummation of such a redemption is conceived as being an immanent possibility belonging to history as such. It may be possible to speak historically and empirically about man, however, and still believe in a "true man" envisaged by the transcendent God, and still hope in a redemption to be consummated also beyond history as such. But such a possibility returns us to the courts of positive biblical religion.

VIII. THE POSITIVITY OF THE GOSPEL AND KIERKEGAARD'S QUALITATIVE DIALECTIC

It is too simple to say merely that the young hegelians cancelled each other out. In their various attempts to correct Hegel's errors, however, they did tend merely to curtail drastically the scope of the System without actually overcoming its basic outlook. This tendency on the left wing did lend some warrant for the attempt of the right wing hegelians - notably Rosenkranz[1] - to show that the young hegelians came to grief because each had grasped the hegelian synthesis in a one-sided way; so that the solution for the whole group was a common return to the arms of Hegel. Another common suggestion, which appears to me to move in the same fundamental direction, is represented by Paul Tillich's approach to modern doctrines of alienation and reconciliation.[2] Tillich argues that "some fundamental Christian ideas are presupposed" in all such doctrines. For example:

> In all of them the essential unity of life is consciously or unconsciously assumed. . . . Without this assumption of essential unity - a consequence of the Hebrew-Christian belief in creation - no conception of reconciliation is possible.

In fact, Christian theology "should acknowledge them as bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh, as self-estranged theology", since these ideas of alienation and reconciliation represent "autonomous developments of fundamental Christian principles", though fragmented and one-sided. It follows that they become coherent and whole only in Christian theology itself; "there are questions left" in each of these doctrines, "questions for which the Christian message is the ultimate answer".[1] But it is clear that in order for this claim to be cogent, "Christian theology" must be conceived along the lines of the ontological type of the philosophy of religion discussed above. (See pp. 109-110, 119-123.) For example, if the "essential unity of life" of the sort required by these doctrines is provided by any sort of "belief in creation", it must be one in which God's immanence in the world is a categoreal condition of the world, and not a free act of God's will; for this "essential unity of life" must be an ontological presupposition. In other words, what is needed is a "belief in creation" which denies that the world is unequivocally other than God. Whether such a view of "creation" is really a "Hebrew-Christian belief" is at least doubtful. The more likely background for this understanding of "creation" is the tradition of German idealism which was consummated in Hegel's dialectic of alienation and reconciliation itself. (See pp. 95-107 above.)

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[1] See Löwith's discussion of Rosenkranz' approach to the young hegelians, Von Hegel zu Nietzsche, pp. 66-71.

[2] See Paul Tillich, "Estrangement and Reconciliation in Modern Thought", The Review of Religion, IX, November, 1944, pp. 5-19. In this essay, Tillich discusses these doctrines in the thought of the early Hegel and the early Marx, William James, and Carl G. Jung. I assume here that Tillich's treatment of the young hegelians would proceed along the same lines.

I am sympathetic with Tillich's intention in this matter. Christian theology must relate itself positively to this dialectic, and its approach to these ideas cannot simply be that of the true to the false. But neither, I think, can it approach these viewpoints as a whole to one-sided parts, as the queen of the sciences to her erring subjects. The insights into the human situation and into the problem of modern man which have been brought to light through the use of this dialectic are authentic and profound. Christian theological and social thinking ought to approach these analyses in the spirit of a pupil who has much to learn from them that he could hardly have discovered for himself. The impasse in the socio-economic and cultural life of modern man, as well as in his religious life, which these analyses have formulated, is authentic; the nature of the impasse is clearly such that mere semantic clarification or more rigorous application of the methods of natural science cannot remove it. Furthermore, the human misery which follows in the wake of this impasse is real, it is writ large in the history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. If Christian thought is to be more than the esoteric doctrine of an insulated sect, if it is to be the thinking activity of Christian people who are a part of this age, it can hardly do better than to listen to these nineteenth century prophets and others who have followed in their tradition.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 18-19.

Yet the theologian must listen critically, and must speak. Finally he must become the partner in a dialogue, and not simply a pupil. He cannot overlook the fact, for example, that the form of this dialectic finally serves to obscure, by idealistic illusions inherent to it, the human situation which it has served with such penetration to clarify. He is not faithful either to his own unique proclamation or to his responsibility for the fruitfulness of the dialogue, if he simply adopts this dialectic as his own - with perhaps the pretentious claim that what is incomplete in other hands becomes whole in his own. His vocation is fulfilled, not by Aufhebung, but by serious hearing and answering in faithfulness to the Gospel.

It appears to me that Søren Kierkegaard pointed the way to the properly critical and evangelical stance which Christian thinking must occupy in relation to the hegelian dialectic and all that it represents. At any rate, the formulation of a properly Protestant Christian standpoint over against the analysis of Hegel and his successors must begin with Kierkegaard, even if it cannot end with him. I propose to discuss Kierkegaard's thought only briefly here, and in direct relation to the hegelian dialectic. I do not believe that this is the best way of understanding Kierkegaard's basic concerns, and if my primary intention here were to interpret Kierkegaard, I should proceed in quite a different way. Yet the polemic against Hegel was at least one of the minor interests of Kierkegaard's authorship, and this mode of approach may be mildly fruitful in illuminating Kierkegaard's thought, as well as completing our discussion of the topic of this essay.

i. Kierkegaard's Attack Against "The System": The Positivity of the Gospel as Absolute Paradox

During the 1840's, at the same time that the young-hegelian critiques of Hegel were being completed, Kierkegaard was producing a body of literature which among other things criticized Hegel more fundamentally than any of them had. Like Strauss he believed that Hegel's synthesis of the Gospel with speculative philosophy was a sham; though unlike Strauss he concluded that speculative philosophy, and not the Gospel, was the worse for the conflict. Like Feuerbach he saw that the idealistic understanding of God reduced divine self-manifestations to qualities of the human religious subject, and like Feuerbach he opposed the merely theoretical stance of idealistic philosophy; but he saw, as Feuerbach did not, that a real overthrow of the theoretical stance, a real determination to "think in existence", involved a reaffirmation of the irreducible finitude of the human subject and his confrontation once again with the claim of divine self-manifestation. Like Marx, he saw that a real dialectic of human existence must issue in consciously willed action; but if he was less aware than Marx of the social form this action may need to assume, he was able to see as Marx did not that a real breach with the idealistic presupposition of the hegelian dialectic required a drastic alteration in the form of the dialectic itself. Kierkegaard's attack penetrated to the very basis of the System, and since as Hegel said, the System is constituted by the fact that its method and content are identical, Kierkegaard attacked both through his critique of the method, and denied that the identity of thought with its object is the truth for an existing person.

This radical opposition of Kierkegaard to Hegel is not contradicted by the undeniable fact that Kierkegaard was heavily dependent on the thought of Hegel at many points. Despite the originality of Kierkegaard's genius, it is indeed difficult to imagine that, say, The Concept of Dread could have been written without the background of Hegel's interpretation of the Fall as the self-estrangement inherent in man's assertion of his freedom. There are many such obvious points of indebtedness in Kierkegaard's development of his leading themes.[1] Kierkegaard was, after all, a dialectical thinker, and he acknowledged Hegel's mastery as a dialectician. But while he was therefore able to make use of hegelian constructions, he incorporated them into a dialectic of quite a different sort than the hegelian, as we shall see. Another consideration that seems to tell against the claim that Kierkegaard directed a really fundamental attack against the System is in fact a manifestation of the differance in the nature of his dialectic: Most of his direct references to Hegel consist simply of jibes, and while his authorship is full of such jibes, they only rarely contain more than a hint of precisely what is being attacked and why. This fact has had something to do with the popular assumption that Kierkegaard really had very little first-hand acquaintance with Hegel's own works, and simply used Hegel to represent some general tendencies he found in the intellectual climate of his time. No doubt Kierkegaard's more immediate targets are such Danish hegelians as Heiberg and Martensen; and no doubt he finds in Hegel an epitome, a philosophical reflection, of all that he finds wrong with civilized "Christendom". But the nature of his references to Hegel and his System is dictated by the rigorous self-reflexiveness of his own thought. In developing the standpoint of the "existing individual" against the System he displays exquisite ingenuity in adapting the form of the authorship to this standpoint.[1] A really _systematic_ critique of the System would have violated this canon of self-reflexiveness, would in fact have amounted to nothing more, on Kierkegaard's terms, than a new paragraph in the System. A fundamental critique of the System must develop a basically opposing form of reflection and mode of expression, which can relate itself only humoristically to the System. Such a development will indicate that from the standpoint of an existing individual the System is merely comic; i.e., what is comic for the existing individual is not that a thinker has developed a System of pure thought - for this the thinker can command his respect - but that the System has presumed to embrace _him_, the existing individual, as a determination of pure thought.[1] The only appropriate response, for the existing individual who is reflective precisely about the fact that he is an existing individual and has adopted a form of expression suited to such reflection, is laughter.

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[1] George Schrader, among others, has pointed out a number of areas of indebtedness, to Kant as well as to Hegel, in an essay entitled "The Philosophy of Existence", The Philosophy of Kant and Our Modern World, ed. by Charles W. Hendel (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1957). Schrader lays special emphasis on the affinity to Hegel (and Kant) in Kierkegaard's view of the self, and recommends the definition of the self given in Sickness Unto Death for the consideration of "those who consider Kierkegaard to be the complete and perfect antithesis of Hegel". (p. 47n) At the same time he shows neatly how Hegel and Kierkegaard diverge in their common appropriation of the kantian self. (pp. 38-39)

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[1] The obvious example is the pseudonymous form of much of the authorship: since the moments of his dialectic of existence are qualitatively discrete ways of life, without logical mediation between them, each is developed from the inside by a different pseudonym. Much significance is attached, in the _Journals_ and in _The Point of View_, to the position of his own name on the title-page and to coincidences in dates of publication.

In fact, from the standpoint of his own peculiar ideal of self-reflexiveness, he takes Hegel to task for not being more careful about his form of publication. "If Hegel had published his _Logic_ under the title of Pure Thought, without indication of authorship or date of publication, without preface or notes or didactic self-contradictions, without confusing explanations of things that might better have been allowed to explain themselves; if he had published it as a sort of analogy to the nature sounds heard on the island of Ceylon, as the immanent movements of pure thought itself, - the act would have been in the spirit of a Greek philosopher. . . . The reduplication of the content in the form is essential to all artistry, and it is particularly important to refrain from referring to the same content in an inadequate form." Kierkegaard's _Concluding Unscientific Postscript_, Translated from the Danish by David F. Swenson, Completed after his death and provided with Introduction and Notes by Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944), pp. 296-297.

It is true that Kierkegaard carries on a more detailed critique of the System in the _Philosophical Fragments_ and the _Concluding Unscientific Postscript_. The pseudonym, Johannes Climacus, attempts to show, among other things, that the coming-to-be of an existent cannot be made a necessary moment in thought; the movement from potentiality to actuality is causal - ultimately requiring an already existing and freely operating cause - and not logical, for it takes place in time while logic is categoreally a-temporal.[2] From this consideration it will follow that while "a logical system is possible" as an eternally fixed structure of self-related abstract terms, "an existential system is impossible".

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[1] "If Hegel had written the whole of his logic and then said, in the preface, that it was merely an experiment in thought in which he had even begged the question in many places, then he would certainly have been the greatest thinker who had ever lived. As it is he is merely comic." _The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard_, a Selection Edited and Translated by Alexander Dru (London-New York-Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 134. See _Concluding Unscientific Postscript_, pp. 65-66n, 99-100n, 558.

[2] See especially the "Interlude" to the _Philosophical Fragments_, Translated from the Danish with Introduction and Notes by David F. Swenson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1936), pp. 60-71. For an excellent detailed discussion of the "Interlude" see Louis Mackey, "Kierkegaard and the Problem of Existential Philosophy", _The Review of Metaphysics_, IX, March & June, 1956, pp. 404-419, 569-588.

> In the construction of a logical system, it is necessary first and foremost to take care not to include in it anything which is subject to an existential dialectic, anything which is, only because it exists or has existed, and not simply because it is. From this it follows quite simply that Hegel's unparalleled discovery, the subject of so unparalleled an admiration, namely, the introduction of movement into logic, is a sheer confusion of logical science.[1]

"Anything which is, only because it exists or has existed" - the positive, in the sense in which that term has been used in this essay - is incommensurable with pure thought, which can think only abstract terms, and these only in an unalterable and ultimately tautological relation with other abstract terms. The notion of logical movement, or dialectical mediation, is only a ruse which cannot really bridge this incommensurability; as Feuerbach had seen, instead of reconciling thought and being, it simply reduces being to thought, thereby denying the fact of positive existence. The result, over which Kierkegaard never ceased making merry, is that the speculative philosopher has to deny, in principle, the fact of his own existence. He thereby makes himself into a fantastic creature, he must pose as speculative Philosophy itself, which has so objectified his existence into thought that he must deny that he has any subjectivity.[2] But this is simply monumental absent-mindedness, since he continues being an existing individual for all that.

> Two ways, in general, are open for an existing individual: Either he can do his utmost to forget that he is an existing individual, by which he becomes a comic figure, since existence has the remarkable trait of compelling an existing individual to exist whether he wills it or not. . . . Or he must concentrate his entire energy upon the fact that he

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[1] Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 99.

[2] Ibid., pp. 50-51, 85, 95n, 107-113, 169-171 et passim.

is an existing individual.[1]

Now, the interesting thing is that Kierkegaard does not deny that there might be an eternal envisagement of the existing individual. For God, he asserts, reality is indeed a system.[2] But he denies that an existing individual can assume the standpoint of God.

This denial, of course, begs the question. The whole result of Hegel's thought was to show that a man can assume, in thought, the divine standpoint. Hegel agreed that in assuming this standpoint a man is no longer merely an existing individual as such, but he had shown in great detail how the merely positive is aufgehoben. Kierkegaard's denial of the principle of logical mediation which accomplishes this Aufhebung appears in the main simply to presuppose the traditional aristotelian logic; maintaining against Hegel the distinction between logical judgments in this traditional sense and existential judgments may have been correct, but it was hardly self-evident in view of Hegel's monumental effort to overcome this distinction.

This distinction between existence and the forms of thought, however, which Kierkegaard had formulated against Hegel with the aid of Trendelenburg's more systematic treatment,[3] is only a kind of confirmation-by-analogy or in fact the reflex of his view of the Gospel event as the Absolute Paradox. For example, Kierkegaard does mean to maintain against Hegel that we cannot show that the coming-into-existence of anything has occurred by logical necessity, and that on the contrary our affirmation that something has come into existence is of the nature of belief, in which there is an irreducible act of will involved. Only by an act of will can we negate the uncertainty in our knowledge which corresponds to the uncertainty of becoming.[1] But it is clear in the Fragments and the Postscript, where this argument is developed, that this general epistemological argument is only the backdrop for the view of faith as the paradoxical passion which affirms, against reason, the Absolute Paradox of the Gospel. The claim of the Gospel and a man's relation to this claim constitute the real basis of Kierkegaard's concern. The fundamental charge against Hegel, which is the real center for every line of attack against Hegel, is that he has violated the nature of the claim, and has misunderstood the relation which a man must have to it. An attack launched on this basis cannot be considered a refutation of the System as such, nor is it intended finally to be; Hegel is vulnerable to this attack only insofar as he intended to be a Christian philosopher, only insofar as faith in the Gospel is aufgehoben into the System as a moment in Reason's own self-reflection.

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[1] Ibid., p. 109.

[2] Ibid., pp. 107-108. This raises two intriguing questions: 1) How does Kierkegaard know this, as an existing individual? 2) Might God, then, be an hegelian?

[3] Kierkegaard acknowledges his debt to Trendelenburg's Logische Untersuchungen, ibid., p. 100; and Journals, pp. 136, 148, 194.

Two things must be noticed about the position of Johannes Climacus, the pseudonymous author of the Fragments and the Postscript: First of all, he is not arguing for the truth of the Gospel; he himself is as yet, in fact, uncommitted. Furthermore, he sees that the only way to argue for the truth of the Gospel would be to regard the consideration of its claim as within the competence of reason, i.e. to show that it is identical with the "truth" knowable by reason. But this view of the Gospel is just what he is concerned to deny. His procedure is to carry on a "project of thought" in which he means to explore, purely as a poetic possibility, the concept of a relation to a "truth" lying entirely outside the socratic mode of "recollection"

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[1] Philosophical Fragments, pp. 66-70.

- i.e. "recollection" broadly construed as reason's capacity to appropriate all cognizable content to its own nature as objects of thought. Now, it must be admitted that Johannes does not carry out this project in an entirely innocent way. What he in fact "discovers" is that the Christian categories fulfill the conditions of this non-socratic concept perfectly. It is clear that he has begun his project with the Christian categories in mind.[1] He has been concerned throughout the Fragments to show that Christianity is irreducibly positive, an historical phenomenon which cannot be aufgehoben into reason's own self-relation, yet which is the "historical point of departure" for "an eternal consciousness".[2] Nevertheless, as he underlines in the Postscript, he has not attempted to "raise the question of the truth of Christianity", but merely to deal with "the question of the individual's relationship with Christianity".[3] The device of the "project of thought" has been introduced so that Johannes can address himself to a categoreal consideration of the nature of the Christian claim and of the individual's relation to it, showing that it cannot be reduced to a merely objective determination of reason itself.

This consideration brings us to the second interesting thing about the function of Johannes Climacus in Kierkegaard's authorship. Johannes is not yet a Christian, is not yet himself in the existential relationship which he describes. At any rate, Johannes plainly tells us that his opinion in this matter is none of our business and is quite irrelevant to our own relation to the project he has undertaken.[4]

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[1] Kierkegaard acknowledges this fact in an entertaining way by having an objector charge Johannes with plagiarism at the end of each chapter in the Philosophical Fragments.

[2] Philosophical Fragments, Title Page, and p. 92.

[3] Concluding Unscientific Postscript, pp. 18-20.

[4] Philosophical Fragments, p. 3.

His relationship to us, that is, is purely socratic; he makes no claim upon us, but merely helps us to clarify for ourselves the New Testament categories. This maieutic relationship in which Johannes stands to us is, to be sure, "the highest that one human being can sustain to another", but "begetting belongs to God alone".[1] Understood in Christian terms, only God can give the condition for affirming the truth, i.e. for being in the truth, yet Johannes Climacus or any John Doe can in principle discover for himself _what_ the Christian categories are, why they are incommensurable with reason, and why only God can give the condition for living in them and thereby affirming them as the truth. Johannes, who is by no means a "witness to the truth", can aid us in exploring these categories intellectually, but only as a "project of thought" without any truth claims being implied. In the role of Johannes Climacus Kierkegaard feels free to explore these categories more or less systematically, to concern himself with showing their incommensurability with reason, and to launch a fairly explicit polemic against Hegel, even bringing forward some general philosophical alternatives to the System. No doubt this puts Johannes in an ambiguous position. He has to admit that his project of thought is concerned with a question "asked in ignorance, by one who does not even know what can have led him to ask it".[2] The man who has made the "leap" of faith, however, is related in quite a different way to that which has given him the "condition" to do so - as Johannes himself makes clear. He may or may not be interested in the kinds of clarification which Johannes is able to offer, but such an interest by no means defines his relationship to the claim of the Gospel. It is significant that in the Edifying Discourses which Kierkegaard wrote under his own name, he turns in an increasingly direct form of communication to a call for personal self-examination, and finally to a direct confrontation of the individual with the claims of the Gospel; there is virtually no interest in philosophical clarification of the nature of this claim.[1] It is even more clear in Training in Christianity that Anti-Climacus, the pseudonymous author who occupies a standpoint in faith higher than that of Kierkegaard himself, is concerned in a far too existentially serious way with the claim of Christianity on the individual to concern himself with any kind of objective definition of the relation between them.[2]

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 6. This divine begetting, here understood in socratic terms, remains true in quite an altered sense when it is understood in Christian terms: "Between man and man the socratic midwifery is the highest relation, and begetting is reserved for God, whose love is _creative_, but not merely in the sense which Socrates so beautifully expounds on a certain festal occasion." p. 24.

[2] _Ibid_., p. 5. Johannes approaches rather near the gulf which separates him from the evangelist, however, in his acknowledgment that "if God gave no sign" the very idea of the true God becoming man could never have entered into his head, even as a poetic possibility.

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[1] See "On My Work as an Author", The Point of View, etc., Translated with Introduction and Notes by Walter Lowrie (London-New York-Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1939), pp. 148-150. Kierkegaard points out in the Postscript that the previous Discourses have been "Edifying" and even philosophical, and for that reason were not announced as sermons. Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 243n. They are "philosophical", however, only in employing immanent categories, and not in the sense that the Fragments are.

[2] Ibid., p. 146n. See Training in Christianity and the Edifying Discourse which 'Accompanied' it, Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944).
This difference in the manner and basis of speaking is the sharpest of all for one set aside by God to speak "with authority", whether through the special call to be an apostle or through ordination. This "witness to the truth" can be made solely on the basis of the divine authority, without any concern with immanent principles - in relation to which indeed the divine authority is radically paradoxical. Kierkegaard develops this distinction carefully in his book, On Authority and Revelation: The Book on Adler, or a Cycle of Ethico-Religious Essays, Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955). See especially the section excerpted for publication by Kierkegaard as one of Two Minor Ethico-Religious Treatises under the title "The Difference between

Climacus and Anti-Climacus deal with the same central topics, but whereas Climacus aids us in grasping them as concepts in the spirit of socratic midwifery, Anti-Climacus speaks as one who lives in their truth and presses their claims upon us as individuals seeking "training in Christianity".

For Kierkegaard, the irreducible positivity of the Gospel is constituted by the fact that the Gospel event is the Absolute Paradox. The Incarnation is not a manifestation of a truth knowable in principle by the human mind, since God Himself is "the Unknown", which from the standpoint of reason is "absolute unlikeness", "a mere limiting conception" in the kantian sense.[1] This is so, according to Johannes Climacus' poetic construction, not simply because of a limitation in man's cognitive faculties, and not because of the metaphysical distinction between man and God, but in virtue of a state of existence willed by man himself: Man's absolute unlikeness in relation to God is constituted by his sin, as the use of freedom in which man actively departs from God.[2] That is, neither the relationship to God, nor its breach, are to be understood in cognitive terms at all, but as modes of existence. So completely does man as sinner live in his error that he is not even aware of being in error. Now, God in His love converts His absolute unlikeness into absolute likeness, by becoming man. This act, however, does not serve to make God more congenial to reason; rather, reason now becomes doubly confounded.

(continued from p. 383) a Genius and an Apostle", from On Authority and Revelation, pp. 103-120. Kierkegaard regarded himself as merely a "genius", who wrote "without authority" - without being an appointed medium for the proclamation of the paradoxical divine Word - yet as one who had heard the Gospel and believed its divine authority.

[1] Philosophical Fragments, pp. 31, 35.

[2] Ibid., pp. 9, 10-12, 37.

> Thus our paradox is rendered still more appalling, or the same paradox has the double aspect which proclaims it as the Absolute Paradox; negatively by revealing the absolute unlikeness of sin, positively by proposing to do away with the absolute unlikeness in absolute likeness.[1]

From the standpoint of reason, God's redemptive act in history is the Absolute Paradox: For in this act God does not assume the role of socratic teacher, prompting my reason in such a way that he is merely the occasion for a discovery of the truth which lies essentially within my reason's own capacities. On the contrary, God is the Truth which is given, as well as the Giver; this Truth is not passive in relation to me, as is all truth which is discoverable in the socratic mode. In fact, I can receive this Truth only insofar as God Himself grants me the condition for receiving it; God remains the sole active Subject of this Truth, and therefore it cannot be made an objectification possessed by me as a subject. I am not put in possession of new knowledge, but am given a gift which remains irreducibly a gift even in its being given. Rather, I am converted by this gift, literally turned around, no longer in flight from the Truth but given the freedom to live in the Truth. The change wrought in me by at once being given this Truth and being given the condition for receiving it, is "like the change from non-being to being", is a "new birth", a new state of existence. It is a state of existence which is defined essentially by its relation to the divine "Teacher".

> Just as one who has begotten himself by the aid of the socratic midwifery now forgets everything else in the world, and in a deeper sense owes no man anything, so the disciple who is born anew owes nothing to any man, but everything to his divine Teacher. And just as the former forgets the world in his discovery of himself, so the latter forgets himself in the discovery of his Teacher.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 37.

[2] Ibid., p. 14; see pp. 9-14. Johannes continues using the language of "learner" and "Teacher" and speaks of "understanding" this Truth, because he is concerned in this section to contrast the divine act with the socratic midwifery; the whole point, however, is that the usual meaning of these terms is annulled in the former case.

There is another important difference between the concept of God as "Teacher" in this sense and the socratic mode of teaching, a difference quite important for our purpose. Not only does the divine Teacher remain in essential relation to the Truth in which the disciple lives, but "the moment" in which he receives the Truth is now essential to the disciple's relation to the Truth, and not a mere occasion accidental to it, as is the case within the socratic mode. An immanent relation of reason to the truth is characterized by the transition from having an implicit capacity for the truth to having explicit knowledge of the truth as an object of thought; although this transition does in fact happen to take place at one time rather than another there is nothing in the nature of the relationship between reason and its truth which requires that the transition occur at one particular time. Essentially, the relation is timeless. The decisiveness of "the moment" for the disciple's relation to the Truth is constituted by the fact that this Truth is paradoxical from the standpoint of reason, is a Truth for which reason has no capacity. The decisiveness of "the moment" is in fact the reflex of the irreducible positivity of the form in which the Truth is made manifest: God becomes man in an historical event. This is a Truth with which reason cannot cope, because it is not implicit in reason itself and therefore cannot become explicit by an immanent movement within reason. We may recall here Hegel's familiar formula regarding the "positive" - it is something which merely is, without any demonstrable necessity for being. From the standpoint of Reason it is therefore a matter of indifference whether it is or is not, it might just as well not be. But according to Johannes' project, God appears in history as a man, fully a man, in whom no infinite category is discernible.[1] And the identity of God with this man in a particular historical event - this Absolute Paradox - is the Truth! This positive event, whose occurrence or non-occurrence is a matter of indifference to reason, precisely because it is positive, is the Truth! But in order to affirm this Truth, to live in this Truth, everything depends on its having occurred. That is why it cannot be related to the disciple in the way in which an immanent truth is necessarily related to reason. The moment in which the disciple affirms this Truth in faith is constituted objectively by God's own granting of the condition, subjectively by an act of will. This moment is essential to the disciple's affirmation of the Truth, and not merely an accidental occasion for the transition from the implicit to the explicit, because the occurrence of an irreducibly positive event is of infinite concern to him, and not a matter of indifference.

Essential to faith are the relation to the divine Giver of faith, and the moment in which this relation is joined. Therefore, according to Kierkegaard, faith is and remains incommensurable to reason and hence cannot be aufgehoben into the System. Kierkegaard does not deny that the System may after all be the truth. But then the truth would be quite independent of the Gospel; the risk of faith is its objective uncertainty, indeed its absurdity to reason. What he does deny is that faith can be a moment (in the logical sense, not to be confused with "the moment" which precisely rules out its being a moment in the logical sense) in reason, or the Gospel a moment in the System. For the believer as an existing individual, the System is therefore comic.

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[1] "The servant figure was no incognito. And when in the strength of his omnipotent resolve, which is like his love, God makes himself the equal of the humblest, let no innkeeper or professor of philosophy imagine that he is shrewd enough fellow to detect anything, unless God gives the condition." Ibid., p. 52.

ii. The Kierkegaardian Individual: The Infinite Subjectivity of Faith

Hegel, we have seen, did not deny the positivity of the Gospel. Thought could not have grasped the Truth of the Gospel if it had not first been given positively. Yet, having been given and accepted in faith, it can be appropriated by Reason, which means that Reason must show that the Truth of the Gospel is a logical moment within Reason's own inner movement. In principle, that is, it has always been implicit in Reason itself, but the standpoint of Reason is a hard-won achievement of actual human thought, and not its inherent possession. Hegel suggests that it is only through the giving of the Truth in positive form that human thought could in fact attain the standpoint of Reason in which the Truth of the Gospel is in principle contained. (See pp. 196-203, 232-237 above.) Such Truth, says Hegel, is indeed paradoxical, mysterious, to the mere Understanding which holds fast to abstract predicates and distinctions. But life itself overcomes these distinctions and violates the Understanding's abstract law of non-contradiction.[1] Reason grasps the actual movements of life.

Now, Kierkegaard denied categorically that the Absolute Paradox, even when affirmed in faith as the Truth in which one lives, can thereby be made the property of any reason attainable by a man. The Gospel event is not only a positive historical occurrence, but one in which it is claimed that the eternal God appeared for the redemption of man, thus becoming positive in the highest degree, as the Absolute Paradox. God has over-ridden the law of non-contradiction in this act, but this fact does not take human thought a single step in the direction of seeing how such a contradiction could occur. Indeed, so long as reason continues to assert itself in relation to the claim of the Gospel, in such a way that it insists on its own criteria, it must take offense at the claim. Reason must denounce the claim as absurd, for that is what it means for the Paradox to be paradoxical. "The reason says that the Paradox is absurd, but this is mere mimicry, since the Paradox is the Paradox, quia absurdum."[1] There is another course open to reason, however, in virtue of its own rather paradoxical passion to surpass itself and discover the thought "which thought cannot think," even though the thinking of such a thought would be a self-contradiction and would spell its own down-fall. In a moment of passion, it may therefore be led to assent to its own down-fall, and "come together" with the Paradox "in a mutual understanding of their unlikeness." This "happy passion" is analogous to the love in which the lover surrenders his pride in order to submit himself at the feet of his beloved.[2] The disciple, like the lover, makes no demands and sets no conditions. This happy love

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[1] Hegel, Philosophie der Religion, III-1, pp. 75-79.

> comes to pass when the reason and the Paradox encounter one another happily in the moment; when the reason sets itself aside and the Paradox bestows itself. The third entity in which this union is realized (for it is not realized in the reason, since it is set aside;nor in the Paradox, which bestows itself - hence it is realized in something) is that happy passion to which we will now assign a name, though it is not the name that so much matters. We shall call this passion: Faith. This then must be the condition of which we have spoken, which the Paradox contributes.[3]

"Reason sets itself aside" in faith, but it does not commit suicide. The disciple, to be sure, does not "understand the Paradox, but only that this is the Paradox."[4] Yet understanding that "this is the Paradox" is a significant and arduous task for reason. One can undertake to explain the paradox only by "reducing the term paradox to a rhetorical expression," in fact by showing that it is not really a paradox. On the contrary, a man who knows what he is doing in relation to a genuine paradox "will precisely concentrate his energies upon making it clear that it must be a paradox."[1] In relation to other matters, the disciple may perfectly well understand and explain; his understanding does not cease to operate. Nor does he put it down to lack of understanding if others are offended at the Gospel, since in considering the Gospel absurd they only agree with his own understanding. But he "believes against the understanding," and uses the understanding precisely "to make sure that he believes against the understanding."[2]

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[1] Philosophical Fragments, pp. 41-42.

[2] Ibid., pp. 29-31, 38-39.

[3] Ibid., p. 47.

[4] Ibid.

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[1] *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, pp. 196-198.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 502-505. J. Heywood Thomas is misleading in his interpretation of Kierkegaard when he says that "for the believer there is no absurdity in the Paradox." He is able to draw verbal support from one passage in the *Journals* and another in the *Papirer* for this assertion. But in the first, Kierkegaard is referring precisely to the fact that the believer must be willing to accept the judgment that what he believes is absurd. "To understand that to the reason it is absurd, to speak of it thus quite calmly to a third person, admitting that it is the absurd, enduring the burden of the other man looking on it as the absurd - and nevertheless to believe it. While naturally it is a matter of course that *for him who believes it is not the absurd*." *Journals*, p. 386. In the other passage, quoted by Thomas, Kierkegaard says, "The absurd is a category; it is the negative category of the divine and of the relation to God. *After the believer believes the absurd is no longer absurd* - faith changes it. But any new moment of weakness gives it more or less this character: if it were not thus faith would not be faith, but some kind of knowing. Thus the absurd throws us into faith's sphere which is a sphere apart. . . . We know that love makes one blind. True. But what a misfortune it is not to be made blind by love. . . . It is the same with the health and joy that faith breathes in the bosom of the absurd." I have underlined the phrases Thomas appears to have in mind. Even in the immediate context "the absurd" seems to be used in a rather equivocal sense in these phrases. When Kierkegaard says that for the believer the Paradox is not absurd he appears to mean simply that the believer accepts the Paradox as true. But this is the truth of faith, and if the believer were no longer "in the bosom of the absurd" he would no longer be in faith and would no longer be a believer, but would have "gone beyond" faith.

Thomas correctly indicates in this connection that Kierkegaard does not simply open the floodgates of absurdity. In the passage which I have cited from the *Postscript*, Kierkegaard goes on to say that the believer will continue to exercise his understanding against nonsense. As Thomas says, "just any absurdity is not good enough here. It is an absurd that must be true." This is quite right, but it does not follow that "It must make sense when we have believed." The condition of its truth is not that it makes sense but that it is given by God, who at the same time gives us the condition for affirming it as the truth - *quia absurdum*. Thomas goes on to say that "the contradiction must not be played down. Here more than anywhere in Christianity we must *believe*." But a belief which can "make sense" of the Paradox, for which the Paradox is no longer absurd, is ripe for Aufhebung into the hegelian System. See J. Heywood Thomas, *Subjectivity and Paradox* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957), pp. 132-133.

The understanding cannot grasp even the possibility, much less the necessity, but only the positive fact of the Gospel event.

Hegel would have objected that Kierkegaard has simply become fixed at the standpoint of the abstract Understanding. But Kierkegaard's point is that the standpoint of hegelian Reason, or of any other mediation of the Paradox into thought, is in itself a falsification of the Truth manifested in the Paradox, because it is a departure from the relationship to the Truth posited by the Truth's own mode of manifesting itself. The Giver and the moment of giving are alike decisive for the relationship to the Truth posited by the gift of faith. Only a relationship in which they remain decisive can correspond to the Truth itself, which is God becoming a particular individual at a particular point in history.

> For as the eternal came into the world at a moment of time, the existing individual does not in the course of time come into relation with the eternal and think about it. . . . but in time comes into relation with the eternal in time; so that the relation is within time, and this relationship conflicts equally with all thinking, whether one reflect upon the individual or upon the Deity.[1]

Faith, which is the relation to the eternal-come-into-time, is itself an eternal condition received in the moment.

> But in that case is not faith as paradoxical as the Paradox? Precisely so; how else could it have the Paradox for its object, and be happy in its relation to the Paradox? Faith is itself a miracle, and all that holds true of the Paradox also holds true of faith.[2]

If Christian faith were merely the acceptance of a doctrine, even a paradoxical doctrine, there would be nothing to prevent its Aufhebung into the System. But faith is a state of existence, related paradoxically to the paradoxical fact, and not to a general idea, however paradoxical. "Christianity is no doctrine concerning the unity of the divine and the human. . . . but the fact that God has existed."[1] This *fact* is the Truth - that is what constitutes the irreducible positivity of the Gospel. The God who acts here is a Reality, a Subject, Who defies objectification precisely in virtue of existing in a positive event. Kierkegaard's famous declaration that "Truth is subjectivity" did not mean that anything which one believes passionately becomes true. The Truth remains the Truth whether anyone is related to it or not; it cannot be manipulated either by thought or by passion. It is quite "objective" in that sense of the term. It cannot be "objective", however, in the sense of being appropriated as an object of thought, since the Truth is a Subject, God, manifested paradoxically within a concrete existent, Jesus Christ. The Truth, that is, is manifested inwardly in the sense of being inside existence, and not "outwardly" or "objectively" to thought, for which all existence is in principle accidental. Only on this basis can it be said unequivocally that Truth is subjectivity for the existing individual. The existing individual has relation to the Truth only insofar as he is oriented inwardly, lives in the Truth as a mode of existence; and this can be done in the most unequivocal sense only insofar as he has received the condition of faith. This movement into subjectivity, i.e. into existence, is radical risk, because objectively this Truth is uncertainty and indeed absurdity. In fact, the Truth which is this "objective uncertainty held fast in an appropriation-process of the most passionate inwardness" is "an equivalent expression for faith."[2] For faith, we recall, is as paradoxical as the

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[1] Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 506. I have made a minor correction in the translation, omitting an "it" which is not in the Danish text and makes no sense, between "but in time" and "comes into relation".

[2] Philosophical Fragments, pp. 51-53. Not only is faith not a purely eternal or ideal condition for the relation to the eternal; but the other side of the coin is that faith is not a merely historical relation to an historical fact as such. Kierkegaard shows at length in the Fragments and the Postscript that historical knowledge as such is a mere approximation, in which the fact that the eternal has come into an historical event cannot be given.

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[1] *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, pp. 290-291, 338-339. Kierkegaard offers rich confirmation for Strauss' judgment that the Incarnation, far from presupposing the unity of the divine and human natures, presupposes the opposite. See p. 267 above.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 182. See pp. 178-179, 285-286, 540ff, et passim. Kierkegaard is not proposing here a general epistemological formula. Scientific knowledge is of course "objective".

Paradox, is in the existing individual the direct relation to, and reflex of, the Paradox of the Gospel.

Everything depends, therefore, not primarily on what is said about the Gospel, but on how one is related to the Gospel event. In this sense Kierkegaard charges that Hegel's mediation of the Gospel into thought is a basic falsification. The movement of a man toward thought about the Gospel, making the Gospel a moment in his thought, is just the movement away from the Truth of the Gospel; for such a movement is from inwardness to outwardness, existence to thought, and requires the "resolution" of the Paradox into an immanent truth of Reason.

> Christianity begins more or less where Hegel leaves off: the misunderstanding is simply that that is the point at which Hegel thought he had finished with Christianity, and even thought he had gone beyond it.
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> I simply cannot halp laughing when I think of Hegel's conception of Christianity. . . .[1]

Hegel's attempted reconciliation of inward and outward, thought and being, was part of the misunderstanding, since it was in fact the collapsing of the inward into the outward, being into thought. The standpoint of hegelian philosophy toward Christianity, that is, is really aesthetic in a broad sense. Of course, the aesthetic proper lives in poetic possibility, the speculative in theoretical possibility, but their break with existence is more or less equal. It is clear to Kierkegaard that the highest existential movement, that of becoming a Christian, proceeds fundamentally in the opposite direction from either.[2] In fact the speculative philosopher is aesthetic, in the broad sense, in relation to all existing realities, including himself, transposing them into possibilities for thought. Of course, all the categories

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1. Journals, p. 372.

2. Just as "the whole pseudonymous, aesthetic work" is "the description of one way a person may take to become a Christian (viz. away from the aesthetical in order to become a Christian)," the Concluding Unscientific Postscript "undertakes to describe the other way (viz. away from the System, from speculation, &c., in order to become a Christian)." The Point of View, p. 42.

are embraced in the System, but the System is reductive toward them all. On Kierkegaard's terms, the System is but the systematization of one moment in the existential dialectic - the aesthetic, which is the moment most remote from concrete existence. The System reduces all the categories of existence, in emasculate form, to this one. The System projects everything backward: relatively, into the past,(as Hegel indicates when he says that Philosophy understands only after the fact) - and absolutely, into pre-existence as modifications of the Idea. This is as it must be, since knowledge is "recollection". But life is lived forward, existence projects into the future; which means that the categories are grasped existentially only insofar as a man actually lives in them. They are grasped "inwardly" into existence and "forward" into the future, rather than "outwardly" and "backward" into thought.[1]

Not Marx, but Kierkegaard was the thinker who turned the hegelian System upside down. He does not entirely tear it apart; it is surprising how much survives. But he tilts it a full 180 degrees, so that a quite different type of dialectic is needed if the moments are to proceed in the reversed direction.

Kierkegaard's "existential" or "qualitative" dialectic has been implied in much of what has been said. However, it is well-known that the kierkegaardian either/or does not discriminate merely the speculative and aesthetic from the paradoxical-religious. He discusses intermediate forms of existence, especially the ethical and the immanent-religious. The speculative-aesthetic, however, represents one extreme, as the movement away from existence through the collapse of all existential categories into thought. The ethical is already an "advance", though not in the sense of the System; by being precisely a retreat from the Aufhebung of existence into thought, it is an advance into existence. Ethical man is an existing individual faced with decision respecting the future, a decision requiring that one course of action be taken in opposition to others. The ethical man, that is, must live in the finitude of the either/or, which he cannot mediate into the infinitude of the both/and without dissolving himself as an existing, ethical individual. Hence Kierkegaard's frequent charge that Hegel had no ethic. This charge appears peculiar to anyone who has read the Rechtsphilosophie, in which it is clear that ethics have an important place in the System. But in its incorporation into the System, the ethical either/or is no sooner posited than it is aufgehoben, as it must be when it is viewed aesthetically, i.e. speculatively, as a subject-matter for thought; for speculative thought must always reflect the finite back into the infinite, where all one-sidedness is corrected by the both/and. But this reflection is the abdication of the position of the existing individual, for whom life moves forward and choice must be made. The gulf between the aesthetic and the ethical is expressed maieutically in Either/Or; different pseudonyms with drastically different styles, between whom there can be scarcely any communication, express the point of view of the two ways of life. Between the aesthetic "seducer" who has dissolved all existence into poetic possibility and for whom therefore any woman is an accidental moment in his own poetic exploration, and the ethical Judge William who celebrates marriage as a commitment to one woman which deepens through the years, there is no mediation. The judge is no match in brilliance for the aesthetic pseudonyms, because he does not revel in possibility, but is directed into existence. Between possibilities one can mediate, but it is just the mediation into possibility which is negated by the ethical. One moves into a deeper mode of existence only by the "leap" in which one takes the radical risk of investing his whole life, his self, in a way of existence which is genuinely new. In fact, with each such leap one moves by inwardness into that which is more finite, opaque to thought, positive. The gulf between is "infinitely wide" for the man who contemplates the leap, for it involves forsaking the mode of existence in which he is totally absorbed, it involves an actual *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*; in fact, no amount of contemplation can give him the least start toward crossing it. Only by a decision can reflection end and the leap be made. The illusion of speculative philosophy, on the contrary, is that "you shut your eyes, you seize yourself by the neck *à la* Munchausen" and find yourself on the other side.[1]

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[1] Concluding Unscientific Postscript, pp. 34n, 263n, 269-282, 306 et passim. Journals, pp. 127, 280. On Authority and Revelation, pp. 175-177.

Kierkegaard's dialectic of existence is qualitative. Its moments are qualitatively discrete "*stadier* on life's way," its transitions are leaps of will, its movement is into the positivity of finite individuality. It is, however, a dialectic. There are levels in this descent into existence. While the ethical is a properly existential category, it is conceived in roughly kantian fashion as determined by universality. While Judge William makes a decision which would be impossible for the aesthete, and commits himself to one woman, this act is ethically significant because it is an embodiment of the universal condition of marriage. Judge William sees the ethical as the fulfillment of generic manhood, and also as a "relationship with God through the universal;" however, he dimly discerns the disturbing possibility of another sort of relationship with God. And just as Kant was polemical toward religious positivity, so is the judge in *Stages on Life's Way*, polemical and bewildered by the thought that a man might, for example, refuse to marry on grounds of the paradoxically religious. He does not confuse such a man with the aesthete, but on the contrary can see a sense in which the paradoxically religious might be regarded as higher than the ethical. Nevertheless he argues on two fronts, against those who cannot decide to marry because all decision is dissolved in limitless possibility, and against one who would decide not to marry, consciously suspending the ethical universal because of a peculiar individual relationship with God.[1] Kierkegaard presents a young man in process of making the leap into the latter, again from the inside through still another pseudonym, in the third part of the Stages, entitled "Guilty?/Not Guilty?" A broken engagement is described, a theme made especially poignant by its autobiographical reference to Kierkegaard himself. The ethical is not annulled; the young man feels its force powerfully, and this raises for him the fact, ethically speaking, of his guilt. Yet there is a developing inwardness toward the religious, which in this case demands that he be an exception. The same theme is developed, this time in humorous contrast to the aesthetic, but again in relation to a broken engagement, in Repetition. Fear and Trembling explores perhaps the most drastic suspension of the ethical universal imaginable, treating Abraham's obedience to the command to sacrifice his son.

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[1] *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, pp. 90-91, 96, et passim.

In all these treatments it is clear that the movement into the religious appears, from the ethical standpoint, to be idiosyncratic. For the new mode of existence is characterized by special divine vocation, which in some cases suspends the ethical. Certainly it does not involve the institution of a new ethic, according to which broken engagement and celibacy is normative, or child-sacrifice permissible. In fact, in Fear and Trembling Johannes De Silentio corrects the overdramatic impression of the religious which might be created by the example of Abraham, by describing the "knight of faith" as one who might be so ordinary to outward appearance, whose way of life might appear to belong so entirely to the world, that there would be nothing about him which to the observer "betrayed the infinite in its heterogeneity with the finite."[2] However, the fundamental point is always this: that the infinite has itself broken through its heterogeneity with the finite, not of course in such a way that it has become identified with the finite as such, but in the Paradox of Gospel event. Therefore "the individual" who in faith is given the highest degree of subjectivity is actually brought through just this extreme of finitude into relation with the eternal, into an absolute relation with the absolute. Hence the shockingly hegelian-sounding expression which one often finds in Kierkegaard's text, that the individual is the unity of the finite and the infinite. Kierkegaard does not mean that the infinite is implicit in human nature. On the contrary, it is the genuinely new possibility posited in the Paradox of the Gospel event, received in faith as the deepest descent into subjective, positive existence. For the existing individual the fulfillment of this unity is always in the future; that is why, in a drastically altered sense, Kierkegaard accepts the philosophical definitions of existence as a constant becoming, or a perpetual striving. "The individual" is a category with eschatological dimensions. So long as one remains in this life one is always becoming an individual, in exactly the same sense as one is always "becoming a Christian" for Kierkegaard.

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[1] Stages on Life's Way, Translated by Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1945), pp. 161ff.

[2] Fear and Trembling: A Dialectical Lyric, Translated with Introduction and Notes by Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1945), pp. 52ff.

> The speculative principle is that I arrive at the eternal retrogressively through recollection, and that the eternal individual is in this manner directly related to the eternal. But an existing individual can have a relation to the eternal only as something prospective, as something in the future.[1]

The eternal is the future into which one moves existentially, i.e. precisely in the accentuation of finitude through inwardness. In this movement the believer receives himself, in the most deeply finite and concrete sense and at the same time as determined by the eternal. This reduplication is dramatized outwardly by Abraham, who in the most terrible break with the universal receives in inwardness the divine command to sacrifice his son - and receives him back again. Likewise the young man in Repetition, like Job, passes through the trial of existence and is again himself - but in the sense that he receives "everything doubly restored." At the same time he acknowledges that this reduplication "in the temporal life. . . is never so perfect as in eternity, which is the true repetition."[1]

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[1] Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 380. See pp. 80-85.

The existing individual is not a simple self-identity, but a becoming which, in faith, issues in a re-duplication, a relation to the self which he is not yet. This relation of the self to the self, however, is not constituted by the self, but by God. Therefore the true self cannot be found by the Aufhebung of the finite self through reflection. Only in receiving the condition which enables the finite self to accept its own self qua finite, does it receive its true self. "By relating itself to its own self and by willing to be itself the self is grounded transparently in the Power which posited it."[2] This proposition, however, cannot be made the basis for an existentialist natural theology, still less an "existential philosophy", because it is based on the positivity of the Gospel, and describes the self-relation of faith, which is as paradoxical as the Absolute Paradox itself.

iii. Comments in Conclusion

Since I have already brought down upon my head the well-known curse of Kierkegaard against future academicians who would meddle in his authorship, it is not surprising that I must next suggest, as he predicted that they would, that we cannot stop where he does. I am not quite so cautious about taking this step as I should perhaps have been if he had not left behind him a kind of key to the authorship, in the Postscript and in The Point of View, where he does attempt to present his dialectic whole. It may be that these writings represent a certain failure of nerve on his part, excusable enough on the grounds that he did wish to be understood, yet constituting a descent into the forum where he must take his chances along with others who have wished to be understood. He was, after all, a thinker; and the thinker who constructed the existential dialectic cannot for us be entirely separated from the Socrates of Christian existence who attempted to communicate from the depths of one existence to another in an indirect and evocative mode.

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[1] Repetition: An Essay in Experimental Psychology, Translated with Introduction and Notes by Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), p. 144.

[2] The Sickness Unto Death, Translated with an Introduction, by Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), pp. 17-19. See also Concluding Unscientific Postscript, pp. 376, 508.

He could fairly claim that, in both roles, his activity as a writer was defined by the paradoxical positivity of the Gospel event itself. The existential dialectic is the reflex of faith, grounded specifically in this Paradox. Therefore it can be seriously discussed only in theological terms, not in general anthropological or speculative terms. The question is whether a dialectic whose "telos" is the exquisitely fine point of infinite subjectivity is really adequate to the standpoint of grace which is its ultimate basis. This question can only be raised vacuously if "grace" is abstracted in the slightest degree from the positive event in which it is given. But just in this event grace asserts its sovereignty over all of life, the high places of the spirit and the low, the surface and the depth of things. This is the moment of truth in Hegel's effort to see things whole, as a vision of all reality permeated by the divine logos. One could acknowledge this moment of truth without mitigating Kierkegaard's critique of Hegel in the least, because grace exercises its sovereignty in the concrete existence of things, and not in their idealization. The Word became flesh, and the resurrection was the resurrection of the body - i.e. a resurrection in which existence was not negated. The movement of Word into flesh is one-way; the flesh does not become Word. But just as God, in remaining the irreducible Subject of His Word, does not come into simple identity with the finite in the Incarnation, so at the same time His freedom with respect to the finite is not limited by the fine concentration of finitude implied in Kierkegaard's paradox of infinite subjectivity. The existence of the Christ was not so one-dimensional as that. Just in His descent into the depths of existence - "even unto death" - God made Himself contemporaneous with all existence, even with those who have not been made contemporaneous with Him in faith.

It might be argued, in general, that despite Kierkegaard's brilliance as a poet of existence, there is an oversimplification of existence implied in his existential dialectic. Its descent into existence follows a single track, at the end of which is not only an existing individual, but an individual isolated from all others in his communion with God. Is the depth of finite existence merely the intensification of subjectivity? Has the depth of existence no genuine inter-subjectivity? Has it no social dimension in an even broader sense, which would not so thoroughly isolate the existing individual, e.g. from the political and economic relations within which each man lives? There is at least a question whether there is not a degree of abstraction in Kierkegaard's view of the "existing individual" in the most eminent sense, whether he has not reduced to accidental features certain dimensions which are in fact essential to the life of each man precisely as an existing individual.[1] Just in his effort to radicalize the positivity of existence, has he not overlooked the complexity attaching to positive existence itself, that I am just this man living at this place with these people etc.?

However, these questions become serious on Kierkegaard's own terms when their christological connection is made explicit. Is infinite subjectivity the real correlate, in faith, of the Paradox of the Incarnation? Does not the positivity, the Paradox, of the Gospel event consist in the fact that God became, not simply an individual, but this individual living at a definite time and place, among one particular people, who called certain persons to be his disciples, struggled with scribes and Pharisees, "suffered under Pontius Pilate" etc.? Exactly so, in just this single event, does God come into relation with each man in each time and place and circumstance, and assert the sovereignty of grace over all according to His choosing. The existence in which God acted is not so antiseptically pure as the existence toward which the kierkegaardian individual is moving. Just in Jesus Christ God asserts the sovereignty of His grace over every stage on life's way, over every existence however remote from faith, even over "the mob" which is the antithesis of the kierkegaardian individual. An individual whose existence is paradoxically defined in faith by the Paradox of the Gospel cannot shrink from the paradoxical assertion that Christ is the Lord of the world.

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[1] Martin Buber, among other things manifests the advantages of learning from Feuerbach as well as from Kierkegaard in pressing some of these kinds of questions in detail and with great penetration. See "The Question to the Single One," Between Man and Man, Translated by Ronald Gregor Smith (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), pp. 40-82.

Just the man who knows the claim of the Gospel is required not only to enter into intimate communion with others, but into serious dialogue with "the world". This dialogue, like that communion, involves risks from which I cannot be protected by the impregnable stronghold of infinite subjectivity. Precisely in faith I need not be defensive with respect to the world, precisely in faith I am required to enter into serious hearing and answering with "the world" - not only because I know myself in faith to be no alien from the sin of the world, but because the world is no alien from the grace of God in which, in faith, I stand. With this statement we return, as is appropriate in a dissertation on Hegel, to the discussion contained in the Introduction. The great risk involved in the kind of dialogue which is the specific vocation of philosophical theology is the diffusion of the Paradox implied by the positivity of the Gospel. But this risk is entailed by faithfulness to the Gospel Paradox itself, if the Christ we meet in this event is Lord. Existence within this tension is the genuine situation of the Church and the individual believer.

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